HOW SERVICE LEARNING CONSTRUCTS IDEAL CITIZENS FOR THE NATION

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Abstract

Part of the mission of U.S. postsecondary institutions is molding citizens for participation in democratic society. Service learning is a popular pedagogy to enact this formation. This dissertation highlights how mechanisms of domination accompany the aims of democracy within service learning practices. I offer theoretical and practical insights of how democracy and domination—often considered contradictory powers—are mutually reinforced through contemporary civic engagement efforts. I find that the framing of service learning projects, and how students are positioned within them, influence the direction of racial formation and the augmentation and/or disruption of ideal citizenship. Through three service learning sites—an after-school tutoring program, a labor union, and a Native Hawaiian land stewardship program—I illustrate how societal messages, rhetoric from instructors and site coordinators, and the roles expected of service learners set parameters around democracy while fostering hierarchies of bodies and knowledge.

The analytic focus of this critical ethnography is on the discourses and interactions that occur within the processes of service learning. Using a year of data from university service learning classrooms, community sites, and in-depth interviews with students, faculty, administrators, and site coordinators, I examine how these processes encourage characteristics of ideal citizenship that support the nation-state. Informed by theories of racial formation (Omi & Winant, 2015) and neoliberal governmentality (Foucault, 1991; Raddon & Harrison, 2015), I illuminate how service learning relies upon and reinforces stratification as college students are hailed into civic responsibility, empathy, and individual transformation. Even when attempts are made to

subvert the social rankings, other ones are strengthened, thereby demonstrating how challenging it is to untangle the twin forces of democracy and domination.

This study addresses the dearth of service learning and higher education scholarship using critical ethnography. I invite scholars and practitioners to wrestle with whether and how the prized traits of citizenship taught through civic engagement projects sustain hierarchies and enforce social control as students learn to surveil themselves and others. I suggest that if scholars and practitioners desire social justice, we need to be overtly political, collectively join in solidarity with activist movements, and refrain from institutionalizing our efforts.

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CHAPTER ONE

U.S. Schooling, Democracy, and Domination

A challenge and possibility of education is the inherent tension between the desire to pass along valuable knowledge and the determination of what knowledge is considered valuable. Decisions are constantly being made about what information, beliefs, and practices should structure society, be embedded in institutions, and be taught to children. These decisions—in both formal and information education—are rife with historical power clashes. In some instances, it is fairly easy to see that decisions about structuring dominant culture were made by the elite and powerful in society (e.g., governments removing Native American children from their families and sending them to boarding schools in order to "civilize" them; or white philanthropists determining the curricula for black students during Reconstruction). In other cases, the power dynamics of how dominant culture and educational priorities are maintained and molded over time are much more complex. Particular ideas become commonplace, or hegemonic, through much more subtle discourses and practices. As Apple (2004) explains, hegemony permeates our consciousness "so that the educational, economic and social world we see and interact with, and the commonsense interpretations we put on it, becomes the world *tout court*, the only world" (p. 4). As such, dominant culture is comprised of an "organized assemblage of meanings and practices" and is transmitted systematically via educational institutions (Apple, 2004, p. 4). These practices and meanings—the curricula—are not neutral; rather, they support certain social interests *and* are contested.

Kliebard (2004) traces this historical contest in the U.S. from the late 19th century to the mid 20th century, noting the major camps as educating for the workforce,

maintaining and enhancing culture, developing children, and improving society. Despite competing factions, each could espouse the importance of their position to one of the U.S.'s founding principles, that of democracy. Those who wanted to educate the masses for the workforce argued that their educational aim, which included skills and knowledge for participation in adult life, was applicable to a wider scope of the population. Those who prioritized the maintenance of culture asserted the classical curriculum should be taught in order to preserve democratic values. The developmentalists emphasized child development for addressing the needs of each individual learner as opposed to a rigid curriculum that excluded a variety of learning styles. Lastly, the group who focused on society's extreme injustices during and after the Depression era believed that education could be used to better the life conditions for the majority of society. With the concept of democracy consistently in the backdrop, each of these positions, which were largely shaped by educational and political leaders, stressed a different approach to the espoused principle, made assumptions about who should be included in the effort and how, and constructed distinct curricular objectives for shaping pupils to participate in it. These positions about how education could be used for democracy not only excluded the people and interests at the social margins but also upheld traditional understandings of social relations—hegemonic notions of gender, race, class, and nation still pervaded access to formal schooling as well as the curricula and pedagogy within schools. Thomas and Levine (2011) note that higher education has done similarly with the concept of democracy. In what they term an "ambivalent relationship to democracy," they contend that while postsecondary institutions have worked to prepare students to be "responsible and informed citizens" (p. 154), these

same institutions "have always selected and served a privileged class and have made choices about whom to admit and what to teach on the basis of values that have not been strictly democratic" (p. 155).

Regardless the political persuasion or purpose, primary, secondary, and postsecondary education have always been about producing a type of "ideal citizen" that possesses certain knowledge and embodies particular behaviors, both of which are supposed to be used to support a "democratic" nation. In short, U.S. schooling often has been used to manufacture the knowledge, skills, interests, and motivations of students for the nation (Apple, 2004). Even though the characteristics of the "ideal citizen" have been contested, U.S. politicians, employers, and educators have often hoped that schooling would shape young people's values and behaviors for participation in a democratic society. Grande (2004) argues that this democracy builds and legitimates "the ambitions of the nation-state—that is the naturalization of white superiority, the maintenance of class domination, and propagation of Protestant morality" (p. 32).

In this dissertation, I discuss how service learning is employed as a popular pedagogical practice that aims to shape its own version of the "ideal citizen." An important objective of service learning is to help prepare students to participate in democracy as engaged and informed citizens (Koliba, 2004; Saltmarsh & Hartley, 2011; Steinberg, Hatcher & Bringle, 2011; Zieren & Stoddard, 2004). Yet, democracy and citizenship are always contested for how they open and/or close possibilities for particular people, ideas, and behaviors, thereby creating various forms of hierarchies. As such, democracy and citizenship can function as systems of control *and* liberation—sometimes simultaneously. In this study, I detail the contours of three different service

learning sites. I describe the service learning format, the assumptions and values embedded within the practice, the positioning of students as well as how students responded to this positioning, and the various interactions that took place within each project. All of these components help to illuminate how this method of engaged learning can operate as a mechanism for colonial and social control and/or as a tool to disrupt such control.

U.S. Schooling as a Colonial Practice

Formal education in the U.S. is entangled with histories of governmental and missionary efforts to colonize Indigenous lands and peoples. Missionaries from a variety of Christian sects, poised to spread their beliefs with those they viewed as primitive, followed European government sponsored "discovery" tours of the Americas, Pacific Islands, Australia, Africa, and Asia. In addition to religious objectives, missionaries wanted to "civilize" those with whom they came in contact. These practices included introducing different sartorial habits so both women and men would be more fully clothed and thus seen as more respectable; suppressing local cultural practices; and bringing in different political and economic methods, such as the concept of private property ownership (Beyer 2017; Buck, 2010). Some scholars refer to these practices as cultural genocide as the traditional customs of Indigenous people were systematically erased from daily routines (Mako, 2012; Nanda, 1996). Missionary education also served the purpose of capital as training people to read and equipping them with certain skills could offer opportunities for colonizers to extract labor from them (Grande, 2004). Indigenous people all over the globe have been victims and survivors of educative efforts at the hands of colonial governments, but also at the hands of people who thought

they were doing good work by "helping" for a greater purpose and power—civilization and their god.

With slightly different machinations, the helping and civilizing strands of missionary education continued during the U.S. Reconstruction era. Seemingly opposing sides—black educators and white business leaders—joined together to create educational institutions for black students (Watkins, 2001). As white philanthropists funded schools that prepared black people for jobs, they positioned themselves as helping. However, these education efforts also deliberately socialized black students to be "pious, conservative, obedient, and loyal to the sociopolitical order" (Watkins, 2001, p. 61). As black bodies were trained to play a profitable role in the industrial period, educational leaders and their philanthropic founders, realized that "domination and democracy were not incompatible. A semiliterate peon could be just as profitable as a chattel slave" (Watkins, p. 60). Both missionary and philanthropic efforts highlight that what may seem at odds on the surface (e.g., democracy and domination; education and oppression), are mutually constitutive. Despite dominant rhetoric that regards democracy and education as inclusive and participatory, and domination and oppression as exclusive and hierarchical, education efforts inherently construct a hierarchy of bodies and knowledge so that there are people to teach and knowledge to learn. In short, democracy and education connote goodness, but have been utilized for domination and oppression. This particularly has been the case within the interconnected contexts and systems of white supremacy, capitalism, and colonialism.

While I articulate white supremacy, capitalism, and colonialism separately in order to remind us that the dynamics all happen simultaneously, Mills (1997) explains

that white supremacy is a system that encompasses both capitalism and colonialism as it operates on moral, political, and economic levels. He notes that in order to justify routine conquering, colonizing, and enslaving, white people created an ideology based on racial superiority, which further allowed them to implement practices of missionary education, land theft, private property, and exploitive wealth accumulation, among others. Through interactions with people of varying skin colors as well as ontologies and epistemologies, white people have shaped dominant discourses and rules in society. They also have profited from the excesses created in the training of bodies and minds.

Using the logic of white supremacy, missionaries and philanthropists have

- come from outside the geographic region to assist a community seen as "in need" of civilizing and educating.
- been motivated from a religious perspective, believing their work is in service to a god as they advance a civilization.
- controlled bodies through sartorial habits and language as well as expected knowledge and practices.
- prepared people for participation in the labor force by teaching specific knowledge and skills.
- extracted indigenous / community knowledge to influence policy, scholarship, and service.

Creating hierarchies of valuation through projects of educating for democracy and domination are not simply etched in the past. Rather, they are foundational within contemporary systems, reverberating in a variety of practices that provide an illusion of good intentions. With a closer examination, however, we can see through the illusion

and into all of the complicated ways in which education subtly reinforces the recursive dynamic of democracy and domination. This dissertation highlights how service learning is one contemporary practice that often echoes missionary and philanthropic efforts to educate for democracy and domination as it trains students for citizenship (Sax, 2000).

Overview of Service Learning in Higher Education

Service learning is a form of experiential education where students combine academic learning with community service experiences to learn more about a particular discipline and gain a "sense of civic responsibility" (Bringle & Hatcher, 1996, p. 222). Teaching students to be civically engaged and participate in democracy is one of the primary objectives of the pedagogy (Eyler & Giles, 1999). Drawing from Deweyan (2004) principles, service learning pedagogy is premised, in part, on learning through "having experiences" (Rocheleau, 2004, p. 6), and then using this learning to address community problems. This type of experiential education not only has students engage with the course content through various community placements, but also understands that students bring their own knowledge to the classroom (Battistoni & Longo, 2011). Because the pedagogy renounces the banking style of education that Paulo Freire (2002) disavows, Butin (2010) suggests that service learning is a "disruptive practice" (p. xviii)—one that benefits students' learning.

Scholars point to the combined influence of experiential education and the political effects of intellectuals being educated during the tumultuous mid-20th century for the rise of service learning in its current form (Stanton, Giles, & Cruz, 1999). The generation of students from the Civil Rights Movement and anti-war politics of the 1960s and 1970s developed into many of the scholars that paved the way for service

learning within academia in the 1980s and 1990s. These educators drew upon their own experiences in advocating for change as well as the Deweyan (2004) approach to experiential education to motivate students to engage with issues in local communities. This was an attempt to assuage young people from increased political apathy (Putnam, 1995). The incorporation of service into education functioned as a way to re-engage and educate college students about how to participate in public life and become "caring citizens" (Rhoads, 1998, p. 293). Creating civically engaged actors aligned both with the political and educational commitments of faculty as well as colleges' commitments to civic and workforce preparation.

Over the course of its implementation, service learning has looked differently depending on the context and the orientations of the faculty, students, community partners. Morton (1995) describes three paradigms of service learning: charity, project, and social change. In the charity model, there are two groups of people, the servers and the served. The servers identify the problem to be addressed and then provide services and resources to people who are viewed as not being able to provide them themselves. Charity is thought to be temporary and limited. While the charity paradigm does not attend to the root causes of the problem, an appropriate time for charity may be after a natural disaster when people have lost a tremendous amount of material resources. However, critiques of charity are that it can create dependency and tends to view people who are being assisted as deficient rather than filled with their own knowledge and resources. Picking up on this charitable strand, scholars have emphasized that rooted in service learning are missionary perspectives that assume superiority of the service

learner and actually reinforce social and economic inequalities (Cann & McCloskey, 2015; Hernandez, 2017). Hernandez (2017) argues:

> Within service learning, the colonizing relationship between those who are served and those who provide service (students, faculty, the institution, etc.) must be understood within the historical contexts of slavery, religious assimilation, and positivist-influenced disciplines that have served as a series of negations for those that are poor, "served", and "oppressed" (p. 28).

Thus, the charity model is viewed as offering potentially needed services and yet critiqued for being patronizing and maintaining inequalities.

Morton (1995) describes that the project model of service learning focuses on concrete problems and solutions, like building affordable homes for people who do not have them or tutoring students who need assistance with their homework. Partnerships between universities and community organizations are built, plans are devised, and implementation occurs. While these partnerships and projects can offer powerful results, challenges exist with this model as well. Morton notes that there can be "unintended consequences" of projects; there is unevenness as one side (e.g., the university) is viewed as the expert who defines the problem, typically in a different way than the people they are assisting; and there tends to be a linear model of problem solving and outcome measures that mask all of the nuances of how people actually experience life and the complexity of issues (p. 22).

The third model of service learning is social change (Morton, 1995). This model centers relationships among people and focuses on the root causes of issues.

A premise of this model is that structures of systems are what create realities like poverty and oppression. This paradigm holds that when people work together, they can alter systems and rearrange how power operates so that it more appropriately attends to the needs of those who have been oppressed.

Each of these service learning models have been used within higher education. Because service learning has been closely linked with preparing citizens to participate in democracy, Westheimer and Kahne (2004) ask what type of citizen (experiential) education intends to produce? They outline three citizenship types that can fairly easily be overlaid onto Morton's (1995) three models of service learning: personally responsible, participatory, and social justice. Becoming personally responsible is comprised of cooperating with the basic principles of society like obeying laws and paying taxes. Participatory citizenship consists of knowing governmental processes as well as organizing and/or being involved in community betterment projects. Social justice citizenship involves critically examining societal structures to further understand stratification, knowing about social movements, and being able to take that information and create societal change. An example of this citizenship framework being used to assist homeless people might look something like the following: personally responsible citizens volunteer at the local overnight shelter; participatory citizens organize their neighborhood to facilitate their community center becoming a homeless shelter; and social justice citizens ask why people are homeless in the first place and work to change structures that result in homelessness.

These models of service learning and citizen education preparation have been increasingly implemented over the past three to four decades, often without thoughtful

attention to which model was being emphasized. In fact, when service learning started growing in popularity, it was challenged as not being academically rigorous enough for university education (Harkavy & Hartley, 2010). In reaction to critiques, university faculty who utilized service learning made calls for scholarship that theorized the practice and proved the rigor and learning outcomes of the pedagogy (Eyler & Giles, 1993; Giles, Honnet, & Migliore, 1991; Giles & Eyler, 1994; Giles & Eyler, 1998). Many scholar-practitioners took this charge seriously and created a trove of scholarship that attests to the benefits of service learning. On the academic front, the practice yields increased academic performance (Astin, Vogelgesang, Ikeda, & Yee, 2000) and higher college retention and completion rates (Bringle, Hatcher, & Muthiah, 2010; Lockeman & Pelco, 2013). On the social and emotional level, service learners gain greater understanding of cultural differences (Astin, et al., 2000; Steinkopf Rice & Horn, 2014), experience a greater sense of belonging in higher education (York & Fernandez, 2018), and enhance their moral development (Langstraat & Bowdon, 2011; Pierangeli & Lenhart, 2018; Scott, 2012). Additionally, students who participate in service learning develop communication, writing, and interpersonal skills that prepare them for a variety of careers (Astin, et al., 2000). They also possess a heightened commitment to ongoing civic participation (Beaumont, Colby, Ehrlich, & Torney-Purta, 2006). Research has shown that educators have found a pedagogy that seems to work for college students' academic, social, emotional, and career development.

Utilizing service learning, however, is not a fool-proof strategy for these learning outcomes. Scholars caution that there are challenges to doing service learning well. Another, yet overlapping, set of literature describes tips for best logistical and

pedagogical practices. Logistically, faculty should have a strong connection to the community sites (Bringle & Hatcher, 1996; Butin, 2015); community partners should be involved in the planning of the service learning project (Bringle & Hatcher, 1996; Butin, 2015); in order to enhance the learning experience, the duration of service learning should occur over the course of the semester, or even multiple terms, rather than a short time period (Billig, Root, & Jesse, 2005; Mitchell, 2007); students should have a role in determining their placement so that it best aligns with their interests (Reed, Rosing, Rosenberg, & Statham, 2015; Rosing, Reed, Ferrari, & Bothne, 2010); and more service hours tend to yield deeper learning (Astin & Sax, 1998; Mabry, 1998). A number of components need to happen on a pedagogical front as well. At a base level, reflection on community experiences need to be incorporated into the classroom to assist students in deepening their interest in the subject matter of the course (Parker-Gwin & Mabry, 1998). Reflection is also important to offer students an opportunity to critically think about the power dynamics involved in the service (Steinkopf Rice & Horn, 2014). Related to power dynamics, in order for students to change prejudicial attitudes, they must encounter people in ways that contradict rather than reinforce stereotypes—and this contact needs to occur over an extended period of time (Erickson & O'Connor, 2000). Further, for students to develop a sense of compassion that does not reproduce moral superiority, educators should provide space to theorize emotions, including space to critique common understandings of who deserves benevolence (Langstraat & Bowdon, 2011). Lastly, to help students understand that issues like homelessness are not individual problems, educators need to present social problems as structural (Herzberg, 1994). Attending to each of these suggestions takes enormous work.

What is expressly noticeable in educating for citizenship using the suggested strategies for service learning is that students' individualized learning is emphasized in the hope that students will yield all of the positive effects that this "high impact practice" promises (Kuh, 2008). While student learning outcomes and individual transformation are significant, they do not necessarily highlight the social justice aspirations of service learning's founders. Scholars lament and have attempted to understand why service learning in particular, and civic engagement[1] more generally, have not created the social and systemic change initially aspired—both inside and outside of higher education (Butin, 2010; Plater, 2011; Saltmarsh & Hartley, 2011). Despite the proliferation of civic engagement pronouncements and service learning practice throughout the academy (Plater, 2011), scholars have noted a lack of institutional and societal change, at least change that warrants the label of social justice. Even though there is little detail of what these changes would actually look like if realized, reasons abound for its absence: not rewarding faculty in the tenure process for this type of service discourages broader participation in civic engagement (Cooper, 2014; Holland, 1997; Saltmarsh, et al., 2009); a lack of authentic, reciprocal relationships with the larger community does not create social change (Saltmarsh & Hartley, 2011; Sharpe & Dear, 2013); higher education has not been intentional and serious enough about its civic responsibilities (Saltmarsh & Hartley, 2011); the proliferation of service learning has created a variety

[1] Saltmarsh and Zlotowski (2011) differentiate between service learning and civic engagement, noting that service learning is specifically connected to academic courses while civic engagement captures the broader field of faculty and institutional connections to public and political concerns.

of ways that the pedagogy is implemented, often focusing more on models of charity instead of social justice (Butin, 2010; Marullo & Edwards, 2000; Mitchell, 2008); there is a misplaced focus on student learning outcomes rather than community interests and change (Stoecker, 2016); the practice has a propensity to reinforce whiteness and race-based hierarchies (Becker & Paul, 2015; Mitchell, Donahue, & Young-Law, 2012); and neoliberalism's influence on higher education has co-opted the movement with corporate interests, thereby producing responsible citizens and releasing the government from its obligations to social welfare (Hyatt, 2001; Kliewer, 2013; Raddon & Harrison, 2015). Creating positive social change is complex and challenging; thus, there are likely multiple factors for why civic engagement has not resulted in changing the status quo of the academy or society. All of the reasons listed above are likely pieces of the puzzle.

Scholars have attempted to parse the types of community-based experiences and curricula offered to students as a way to move the practice towards more just ends (Mitchell, 2007; Rice & Pollack, 2000; Rosenberger, 2000). Particularly, Mitchell (2007, 2008) distinguishes between traditional and critical approaches to service learning, noting that traditional models expose students to various injustices as they tutor children in underfunded schools, make sandwiches for homeless individuals, or prepare immigrants for English only citizenship tests. With what have been labeled as "white savior" and assimilationist positionings, it can be difficult to find socially just possibilities within traditional forms of service learning (Cann & McCloskey, 2015, p. 11). Mitchell offers what she terms "critical service learning," which examines the underlying causes of injustices and provides students with experiences that foster their agency as engaged actors in the world. In other words, critical service learning makes

the connection with social justice "intentional and explicit" (Mitchell, 2007, p. 102) and pushes students to interrogate the factors that have led to racial, economic, and additional social disparities that exist. Moreover, while traditional service learning focuses on the students' learning outcomes, critical service learning "balances the student outcomes with an emphasis on social change" (Mitchell, 2008, p. 3). Refocusing the pedagogy on the more critical aim of social justice in society, Mitchell asserts that critical service learning is not solely about the betterment of individual students; rather, it encourages students to build "authentic relationships" with people (p. 8), understand the "interplay of power, privilege, and oppression" within society, and commit to "problematiz[ing] the status quo" (p. 9). The end goal for Mitchell and many other scholars and practitioners of critical service learning is to create a more just world.

Interestingly, for all the mention of social justice—and whether it is a major focus within service learning and civic engagement—the concept is rarely (if ever?) defined. Even though there is increased usage of the phrase within popular and academic discourse, assumptions abound about its meaning without adequate explanations of what it intends and/or what genealogies people draw upon as they invoke it. Since definitions of social in/justice influence methods used to achieve it, I'll take a brief moment to explain my own conception of social justice. It is inherent to the arguments I assert. I take a poststructural approach to social justice, believing that social justice is a nuanced and shifting ideal based on the context (Lather, 2007). Nonetheless, for the purpose of a starting point, I draw upon Fraser's (1998) notion of social justice, which first requires an acknowledgment that there are unequal power dynamics in society. In order to attempt to correct for these unjust hierarchies of power, social justice demands both

redistribution of material resources and cultural recognition of collective and intersectional identities (e.g., Indigeneity, race, gender identity, class, sexual orientation, religion, citizenship, physical and mental abilities). To me, this means that material and cultural norms (Melamed, 2011; Simpson, 2014) of heteropatriarchy, capitalism, colonialism, and white supremacy need to be dismantled so that ways of living (and the institutions that guide living) may be restructured, and that resources are distributed more equitably. In addition, I view social justice as taking into consideration the historical and political contexts of injustices. In other words, injustice is not only about the current state of affairs locally, but rather the long, global history of wrongs that continue to haunt daily life, whether consciously or unconsciously, internally, or externally (see Ellison, 1952; Fanon, 2008; Hartman, 2008). Further, social justice embodied is about the collective (yet not always unified, and never static) efforts that resist these wrongs and work for more just futures, including reparations for generational and accumulated inequity (Klocke, 2016). This incomplete, imperfect, yet multifaceted notion of social justice guides my analysis of service learning and its aims.

Even though critical service learning aims for a "social change orientation, working to redistribute power, and developing authentic relationships as central to the classroom and community experience" (Mitchell, 2008, p. 52), it also can miss the mark because "community" is typically simplified to a singular entity—often in the form of nonprofits—that holds a unified and uncontested perspective. In addition to the problem of veiling complexities within communities, many nonprofits with which institutions of higher education partner maintain legacies of both savior and assimilationist epistemologies (INCITE!, 2007). Despite the goal of social change within critical

service learning, understanding root causes of injustices seems to do little to actually create social change, especially when the vast majority of the college service learners are white, middle-class, and able-bodied, and they serve in organizations and schools in economically impoverished communities of color (Butin, 2010). Even when service learners are students of color, as is increasingly the case (Novick, Seider, & Huguley, 2011), the dynamic often has already been constructed as one where college students, viewed as experts with valuable knowledge, assist in spaces where people are considered economically, academically, and socially deficient (Cann & McCloskey, 2015; Veloria, 2015). For instance, college students maintain a valued role when they tutor elementary students or when they prepare adult English language learners for their citizenship test. In short, the college student (typically) possess something that dominant society holds in high regard that the other person does not.

This imbalance in valuation does not mean that there is not some type of mutually beneficial relationship. In fact, service learning scholars note the significance of reciprocal relationships between the university and community partners (Dostilio et al., 2012). Just as service learners offer tutoring or other forms of labor, they also learn from the social contexts in which they are placed and from those with whom they interact. Connecting with people who live in different neighborhoods than they, who have grown up in countries riven with civil war, and who are forced to navigate systems that do not cater to their culture, language, or economic situation offers college students exposure to unequal resource distribution, the challenges of gaining U.S. citizenship, and perceptions about whose knowledge is deemed important. Scholars and practitioners assert that in this process, college students gain empathy (Pierangeli & Lenhart, 2018;

Wilson, 2011) and learn the background knowledge and skills that can assist in mobilizing for change (Marullo, 1999; Mitchell, 2008; Mitchell & Coll, 2017; O'Brien, Patel, Hensler-McGinnis & Kaplan, 2006; Wade, 2007). Yet, in this process, through learning outcomes of students' individual self-development and the appearance of kindness, service learners also extract valuable information from communities of color that have historically and systemically been targeted for land and labor (Martin & Pirbhai-Illich, 2015; Santiago-Ortiz, 2019; Schutz & Gere, 1998; Smith, 2012). This knowledge often ends up being co-opted and corrupted in everything from policy recommendations and scholarship to additional service projects (Pedwell, 2012; Smith, 2012). When extracted knowledge is applied or employed within systems of domination, the hierarchical dynamic of valued bodies and knowledges persists. Those who make the policies, write the scholarship, and design service projects control not only the distribution of material resources needed for survival but also who and what is deemed as holding ideological value, or worthiness. This logic remains difficult to dislodge. The reality of *which* bodies and *what* knowledge are valued and given power within society lingers even with a critical service learning approach that examines root causes of injustice and attempts to shift the power dynamics between teachers and learners. When attempts at "helping" are tethered to a history of domination and colonization, an important question is whether this experiential learning practice can be engaged in a way that does not reify the same oppressive and homogenizing dynamics.

Thus, using service learning to teach about injustice and encourage students to be change agents relies upon a logic of stratification existing between the university and those outside of it. The subjects within university spaces are educated into idealized

citizenship while those outside of university contexts only become legible as worthy citizens when their bodies conform to dominant modes of acceptable behavior. This is not novel. However, given the dependence on this pedagogy and its propensities of hierarchical valuation, of question is how are issues of social injustice, like white supremacy, capitalism, and colonization taught and (un)learned within college service learning experiences? More pointedly, since service is so closely tied to the capitalist and racist histories of colonialism, how are the dynamics of those histories being reproduced, subverted and/or rearticulated as service learning is used to teach about social in/justices? Further, how is this process used to create ideal citizens?

Overview of Chapters

In Chapter 2, I offer an overview of the history of service learning in higher education. I point out that several scholars link the genealogy of service learning to the creation of land-grant universities. In referencing the mid and late 19th century legislation that established many universities (The Morrill Acts), scholars highlight higher education's civic mission, specifically celebrating its expansion of academic disciplines and student population. At the turn of the millennium, education, business, and political leaders called for the renewal of higher education's civic intention. Even though "civic intentions" have positive connotations of participation in democracy, a closer examination of the Morrill Acts and the practices associated with them illuminate the legislations' racist, capitalist, and nationalist purposes and practices. I use this backdrop to question the intentions of more contemporary legislation and efforts within higher education that promote civic engagement.

Turning to the contemporary scene, I provide an overview of the economic, social, and ideological functions of neoliberal capitalism, the context in which service learning has proliferated. I explain that the frame of neoliberal capitalism encourages the creation of ideal citizens, trained in particular characteristics. The concept of ideal citizens, which at its foundation includes mechanisms for racialization, class-ification, and nationalization, pairs well with the type of student that service learning tries to develop. I note how much of service learning scholarship is focused on how the pedagogy produces a variety of celebrated learning outcomes for this "high impact practice" (Kuh, 2008). However, the research tends to dismiss the complexities that take place to achieve the outcomes. Particularly, the structures that frame students' (as well as faculty and community) discourses and interactions remain hidden while emphasis is placed on evaluating students' progress in becoming the type of citizens deemed worthy by higher education. I highlight the power dynamics embedded within service learning's associated discourses, interactions, and processes. Drawing on Omi and Winant's (2015) theory of racial formation, I argue that service learning operates as a "racial project" wherein the project takes place in ways that are both detrimental and helpful to antiracist efforts.

In chapter 3, I explain the methodology for the study. I used critical ethnography (Emerson, Fretz & Shaw, 2011; Kincheloe & McLaren, 2002) to detail the contours of college service learning spaces. After describing the methods used, I provide an overview of the service learning courses and community sites in which I was a participant-observer as well as the participants in these settings. I also explain my

positionality as familiar to institutions of higher education and service learning but an outsider to the geographical context of Hawai‘i.

In the next three chapters, I detail the findings from three different service learning sites where I conducted fieldwork. In chapter 4, I describe Bright Horizons Tutoring, an after-school program wherein college service learners tutored and participated in activities with elementary and middle school students. The design of Bright Horizons Tutoring valued college students (who did not live in the neighborhood) as roles models for younger students within the after-school program. Privileging college students created a framework that implicitly devalued the knowledge and bodies within the neighborhood. This schema was further entrenched by the discourses invoked by faculty and site coordinators who expected role model behavior from college students while also making disparaging comments about the community's character without a broader discussion about the complex realities that impacted the neighborhood. The dynamics seemed like a modern version of missionary rhetoric and actions. Some of the college students reiterated these deficit narratives. This was fairly easy for college students to do given dominant logic that authority figures are to be believed and obeyed, and more specifically, that students should trust college instructors' pedagogical judgement of service learning sites. Despite prevailing narratives, there were a couple of instances that challenged hegemonic notions of low-income neighborhoods as dangerous and university knowledge as valuable. In addition to detailing these moments of interruption, I tell of a creative possibility that could have altered the hierarchical framing that permeated Bright Horizons Tutoring. This possibility almost came to fruition, but fell flat due to the site's unwillingness to be viewed as political. This

chapter provides the most straightforward example in the study of how ideal citizens were constructed—and how some refused this construction—within service learning.

In chapter 5, I explain how a labor union framed a service learning experience. MOBILIZE! referred to itself as an "organizing union," wherein union members collectively advocated to improve their working conditions. Service learners were invited to join in this process. The college students learned about capitalism and how to challenge it. They also learned how to challenge authority. These positions typically were not taught in formal education. Thus, the experience felt a bit more radical for service learners; students were nervous when they attended their first "action" (which was very similar to a strike line). In addition to participating with the union, service learners worked with a group of people called the Activists who were not union members but who aligned with the union on efforts designed to better the social circumstances of all the city's residents. Service learners were often included in Activists' meetings and actions, taking on issues like affordable housing and fighting against immigrant deportation.

While this site seemed more like the critical service learning that Mitchell (2007, 2008) describes, it was not perfect. The site had to rely on the primary structure it challenged in order for workers to gain better conditions: MOBILIZE! did not call for dismantling capitalism, but rather for making it a more livable system. And, even though union staff encouraged the collective action of its members, the organization also identified and ranked bodies and their associated characteristics for who could move the union closer to its goals. Somewhat ironically, the same organization that taught college students the importance of collectively challenging the hierarchy that values authority

and capitalism reinforced a different type of hierarchy. Namely, union members (and college students) who were perceived by staff as having leadership capacity were cultivated in training programs so that they could organize their coworkers (and classmates) to be more active in the union's goals. Within this process, there was an emphasis on efficiency in relationships. More time was invested in service learners who showed interest and potential as young organizers. Reiteratively, college students were taught to assess people based on characteristics the union valued. This was a strategic way to advance the union's objectives. MOBILIZE! as a service learning site illustrates that despite centering social justice concerns, it is difficult to operate outside of dominant frames that create hierarchical valuations of bodies, even when the valuations are toward more equitable aims.

In chapter 6, I chronicle a Native Hawaiian environmental stewardship program, the *Mālama ʻĀina* Program. This service learning program consisted of a range of geographic locations throughout the island, from the mountains to the sea. Steeped in Native Hawaiian culture, the program helped service learners connect to culture, the land, and one another in ways that they previously may not have experienced. This offered a vital way to indigenize their curricular experiences (Trinidad, 2012). Each location within the *Mālama ʻĀina* Program had different features and histories, yet there was a common thread that ran through all of the sites: an emphasis on removing invasive species. The explanations of invasive species and the action of removing them served as a metaphor for the dangers of colonization and the importance of tending to decolonization. This metaphor remained unnamed at the community sites and in the service learning classroom. I explore the intentionality of concealing the symbolic

referent to the metaphor, illustrating that it presented some possibilities and potentially limited others.

This environmental stewardship program, which was over 20 years old, celebrated long and deep partnerships between the university (mostly through the work of a couple faculty members) and Native Hawaiian nonprofits and practitioners. But, the program was not without problematic power dynamics. I detail how unpaid labor was central to the success of service learners' experiences. As service learning relied on unpaid labor, it illustrated the neoliberal shift in responsibility for basic needs from the state to individuals.

Chapter 7, the discussion, weaves chapters 4, 5, and 6 together, explaining that each of the service learning sites drew upon various discourses and interactions to hail students into responsible citizenship in distinct ways. These discourses were supported by, yet sometimes in tension with, how faculty attempted to teach social justice. Bright Horizons Tutoring interpellated service learners as college student role models for young students as they assisted in passing along valued knowledge and behaviors; MOBILIZE! called students into the role of advocating for labor rights as they challenged capitalism and authority; and the *Mālama ʻĀina* Program encouraged service learners to take responsibility for tending Native Hawaiian lands by restoring cultural practices and removing invasive species. Each of the service learning sites were organized differently, drew on specific discourses, and required distinct interactions. As such, the sites were constructed to provide opportunities that reinforced and/or resisted self-development within the dominant (racialized, class-ified, and nationalized) framework of ideal

citizenship. I highlight how service learning has emerged, in part, to support the project of creating ideal citizens who bolster the twin concepts of democracy and domination.

In the conclusion, I encourage scholars and practitioners to turn their attention and efforts toward collective activism. While I do not believe that activism should be institutionalized in any way, finding places of joint solidarity may allow for envisioning racial projects of resistance where students are not positioned as better than the people with whom they engage and where the university cannot use students' service hours as a proxy for their institutional commitment to historically marginalized communities while undermining those same communities through other strategic efforts.

CHAPTER TWO

The Civic Mission of Higher Education

University scholars and administrators increasingly stress the importance of focusing on the civic mission of higher education, including educating students for civic responsibility. Service learning has become a popular mode of promoting education's civic dimension as well as a way to educate for and about social justice. At the same time, some scholars question whether critical service learning can achieve the social justice goals it intends, especially amidst the neoliberal context that pervades U.S. higher education (Hyatt, 2001; Kliewer, 2013; Raddon & Harrison, 2015; Simpson, 2014). Given that social justice is predicated on the fact that past events influence present circumstances, we can understand that historical power dynamics bolster service learning and civic engagement. These contours shape the continued reliance on service learning.

Historical Roots of Service Learning in Higher Education

Harkavy and Hartley (2010) assert that the origin of service learning "can be traced to the historical commitment of American universities to prepare leaders for their local communities, states, and the nation" (p. 419). At the turn of the millennium, a couple of frequently cited documents were published that echo this genealogical thread. These documents called for higher education to re-connect with its civic roots. One document, titled the "Wingspread Declaration on Renewing the Civic Mission of the American Research University," was produced at a conference of administrators from universities, nonprofits, and private foundations (Boyte & Hollander, 1999). The conference's purpose was to "formulate strategies for renewing the civic mission of the

research university, both by preparing students for responsible citizenship in a diverse democracy, and also by engaging faculty members to develop and utilize knowledge for the improvement of society" (p. 6). The second document, entitled "Presidents' Declaration on the Civic Responsibility of Higher Education," came from Campus Compact, an organization of university and college presidents that encourages civic engagement and service learning (Ehrlich, 2000). The documents mirrored one another. Both pieces lament universities' stray from focusing on their "civic purposes" (Boyte & Hollander, p. 9) and the decline of college students engaging in "duties of active citizenship and civic participation" (Ehrlich, p. 1). They both assert that higher education must "renew our civic mission" (Boyte & Hollander, p. 9) and be "agents of our democracy" (Ehrlich, p. 2). Both documents also talk about the importance of giving students multiple opportunities to learn the "work of citizenship" (Boyte & Hollander, p. 8; Ehrlich, p.1). While the boundaries of citizenship are not articulated in regards to actual bodies, the documents note that the "work of citizenship" requires developing "habits," "identities," and "knowledge" (Boyte & Hollander, p. 9) that will contribute to the "common good" (Ehrlich, p. 1). The common good is left undefined, but, the documents note that community service is not enough. The habits, identities, and knowledge that need to be developed, as defined in the Wingspread Declaration, are,

> the arts of public argument, civic imagination, the ability to critically evaluate arguments and information, the capacities and curiosity to listen constantly, interest in and knowledge of public affairs, capacities for intergroup dialogue, and the ability to work with others different from themselves on common

projects and problem solving in ways that deepen appreciation of others' talents. (Boyte & Hollander, p. 10)

Both documents promoted the development of skills accepted as integral to "citizenship" within a democracy. However, what is crucial to note is that the call of "renewing the civic mission of the research university" (Boyte & Hollander, p. 6) refers to the Morrill Act of 1862, which established land-grant universities for the purpose of educating the "industrial classes" in agricultural and mechanical arts (Library of Congress, n.d.). In the mid-nineteenth century, this concept was innovative since higher education was known at the time for solely teaching humanities and sciences to the elites in society. Contemporary scholarship interprets the Morrill Act in a way that assumes the primary reason for establishing land-grant institutions was educating the masses for participation in democracy (Boyte & Kari, 2000; Colby, Ehrlich, Beaumont & Stephens, 2003; Harkavy & Hartley, 2010). With a closer examination though, it becomes evident that interests in democracy were intricately tied to concerns of the economy and nationalism.

Key (1996) argues that economic concerns were the principle purpose of the legislation since the federal government was giving away lands—lands that were stolen from Indigenous Peoples—in order to generate revenue through development. The logic was that the proposed educational institutions would be able to increase agricultural production and consumption by advancing the science of agriculture (Key). While a rural faction desired an education that prepared youth to return home and become better farmers, the elite sought to train a new class of rural youth (mostly white men) to move to urban centers, heighten scientific knowledge, and manage the modern economy

(Sorber, 2018). The incentive was upward mobility into an emerging middle class. University-sponsored research and education helped farmers improve their crop yields, supplying food for a majority of Americans *and* allowing the U.S. to become a more sophisticated international competitor (Florer, 1968). In other words, the increased agricultural capacity boosted through land-grant institutions not only fed U.S. citizens but also was a major generator for economic power throughout the 19th and 20th centuries as the U.S. increased its exports. And, with the Industrial Revolution well underway, mechanical education improved the skills and efficiency of laborers in factories. As land-grant universities educated the working class, they shaped citizens who could bolster the economic strength of the nation, and ultimately U.S. ascendency within the global market. In short, educating the working class coincided with economic efforts of nation-building.

States were not given these lands free of conditions; rather, the federal government made the receipt of the land contingent on specific requirements, including: 1) states needed to submit an annual report on the progress of land-grant institutions, including "improvements and experiments" and "State industrial and economic statistics" and 2) states not being "in a condition of rebellion or insurrection against the government of the United States" (Library of Congress, n.d.). The first point highlights how the federal government deliberately extends its reach to the educational sector by requiring monitoring and tracking in exchange for the resources it has bestowed. The second point illustrates that obedience to the federal government is paramount. Of course, this second point is understandable when we remember that the background to this legislation is the Civil War. It may be less understandable if states were rebelling

against the federal government because of stolen lands or unequal distribution of resources.

Following the war, one of the problems with the legislation was that many of the land-grant institutions, particularly in Southern states, denied admission to black people. Not until the Morrill Act of 1890 were lands and funds set aside for institutions that would admit black students. Reconstruction had largely failed, and political, business, and education leaders were scrambling to create a new way of organizing the national economy without slavery and without revolt, but in a way that would preserve work and wages for white people (Foley, 1998).

With a focus on vocational education as opposed to classical education, youth learned to adapt to their changing environment rather than shape or reform it (Giroux & Giroux, 2004). Efforts focused on teaching students to be "good citizens" with "civic virtues [such as] 'obedience, helpfulness, courtesy, [and] punctuality'" (Kliebard, 2004, p. 109). Educating youth was more about passivity rather than critical thinking and questioning. Watkins (2001) illuminates how postsecondary education during Reconstruction was intertwined with philanthropic white founders attempting to socialize black students to be both obedient and profitable. Even though slavery was officially over, the material, emotional, and discursive power dynamics closely mimicked such domination. Herein lies the trouble with educating for citizenship and democracy: they are linked to white supremacy, capitalism, and ultimately, empire-building.

Detailing this history reveals higher education's civic intentions to reinforce racial hierarchy and to build a labor force for the national economy. Education's

partnership with capitalism created interconnected material and symbolic effects: the U.S. became a leader in the global economy through increased commodities, and a hierarchy of valued bodies was reproduced through institutional racism. Ferguson (2012) asserts that as land-grant institutions developed farming and industrial management into professions, they extended the respectability of university-trained careers to white, working-class families. While universities emphasized their expansion of class diversity, Ferguson (2012) argues, "The development of the professions was thus part of a larger racial project designed to uplift white working-class families as the new symbols of professional endowment for a new industrializing democracy" (p. 85).

Thus, when current documents and legislation signal the necessity of returning to the "civic purposes" of education, it is important to keep in mind the hierarchical purposes and consequences embedded within these histories. The overt and hidden symbols invoked through the rhetoric and practices generate questions about the economic and socio-cultural motives of contemporary calls (and legislation) for civic responsibility as well as the methods used to achieve it. Just as nineteenth century capitalism—including the practices of stealing land and slave labor—influenced legislation that utilized educational institutions to extend white supremacy and U.S. ascendency by training more people for a new labor force, the contemporary economic context of neoliberal capitalism functions in similar ways.

Neoliberal Capitalism

The emphasis on the need for community service coincided with over a decade of economic rhetoric claiming that "big government" was bad and that funding for social programs needed to be cut so as to avoid creating dependence on such programs

(Alexander, 2012; Duggan, 2003; Hyatt, 2001).[2] The current economic context of neoliberalism started in the 1980s and 1990s with policies that deregulated businesses, increased globalization and free trade agreements, privatized public entities (including schools), and made cuts to social welfare programs while increasing military funding (Steger & Roy, 2010). The logic of neoliberalism is that the corporate sector can solve the country's economic ills. As reliance is transferred from public institutions to private ones, so are determinations about wealth. Financial decisions are taken over by corporate elites and institutions, which are not required to be as publicly accountable as governmental institutions (Duggan, 2003). In regards to social affairs, the thought is that individuals and communities should be able to rely on one another. Rather than the state providing basic human needs, people should be responsible for themselves, or in cases where they cannot, then family members, neighbors, or social service providers should take up the obligation. However, one of the negative ramifications of privatization and personal responsibilization is that they "hid[e] stark inequalities of wealth and power and of class, race, gender, and sexuality" (Duggan, 2003, p. 5). Since these inequalities are relegated to the sphere of individuals and communities, they are made to seem as though they do not need to be addressed by the government. To a large degree, the call for increased participation in civil society is predicated on the state not caring for its

[2] The programs to be cut were ones that were initiated during the era of Keynesian economics. In the U.S., Keynesian economics is best known for housing, education, and employment programs under President Roosevelt's New Deal spending. Of note is that even though the federal government provided greater social support to people under these programs, racism ensured that those who benefitted the most were white people (Foley, 1997). The reversal of Keynesian economics was intended to stimulate the stagflation of the 1970s, and operated under the logic that the free market could solve the nation's economic problems.

citizens—as well as those who live within its borders who are denied citizenship. Participation in this "socially responsible civil society" (Duggan, 2003, p. 10) becomes increasingly necessary as the government limits its role.

While the above explanation highlights the economic and social dimensions of neoliberalism, Dennis (2009) argues that intertwined within these logics is an ideological one. The combined economic, social *and* ideological positioning is the context in which service learning has proliferated. While the financial and social components of neoliberalism discourage a reliance on the state for social service needs, the ideological component depends on the state to provide the public policy parameters for the market to operate freely while the state increases social control. Namely, through the power of the state, corporations receive tax breaks that channel money away from social programs and toward militarization (Steger & Roy, 2010). In the midst of this, the state constructs opportunities to hail people into roles where they can assume greater civic responsibility. Yet in an intentional twist, the civic responsibility is used for purposes of greater social control. Dennis (2009) contends that the assumed "apolitical" rhetoric of civic engagement encourages people to build relationships with one another not for the sole purpose of developing community, but so the government can increase its ability to monitor behaviors at a distance (p. 156). Because the economic functions of neoliberalism have become commonplace, the ideological project of governmentality takes center stage (Foucault, 1991). Melamed (2011) concurs, noting that within neoliberal governmentality, governments act "as businesses whose business is to engineer and manage human, organization, legal, and natural resources to maximize value and optimize productivity" (p. 147). With this governmentality framework,

neoliberalism not only espouses privatization and responsibility, but also individualism, entrepreneurialism, managerialism, and "freedom of choice" (Larner, 2000, p. 7; see also Duggan, 2003; Hyatt, 2001).

We have to look no further than legislation in the 1990s to find poignant examples of neoliberalism's economic, social, and ideological processes impacting service learning. The National and Community Service Act of 1990 created a federal agency designed to "renew the ethic of civic responsibility" by encouraging volunteering that would "benefit the Nation." In particular, the Act sought to "improve the life chances of the young through acquisition of literacy and job skills," and "to help meet human, educational, environmental, and public safety needs, particularly those needs relating to poverty" (National and Community Service Act, 1990). This legislation closely aligns with neoliberal interests to imbue values of individuals caring for basic human needs so that publicly supported institutions are not expected to. In 1993, the Act was reauthorized, establishing the Corporation for National and Community Service and three particular service-based programs, including service learning programs in primary, secondary and post-secondary educational institutions. Universities avidly took up the call of renewing civic responsibility, referencing their founding missions to educate the public for citizenship. As funding was allocated for these new federally administered service programs to "mobiliz[e] Americans into service" (Corporation for National and Community Service, n.d.), the federal sponsorship "began a period of 'institutionalization' of service-learning" (Battistoni, 2013, p. xiv; see also Bringle & Hatcher, 2000). Given legitimacy by the government, postsecondary institutions "pumped resources into their service-learning infrastructure" by establishing community

service offices, offering faculty development about the pedagogy, and creating connections with community organizations in order to "link campus and neighborhood resources" (Battistoni, 2013, p. xiv). Aligning political and educational priorities created attention on service learning as a pedagogy wherein students could be socialized into responsible citizens.

Scholars remind us that participation in this "socially responsible civil society" (Duggan, 2003, p. 10) becomes increasingly necessary as the government reduces their responsibility for people's basic human needs (Eby, 1998). Philion (2017) observes that universities effortlessly link service learning with "neoliberal values of personal responsibility and individual development" as well as "individual giving and self-improvement instead of analytical and active practices that produce anticapitaist, antiracist, and emancipatory work" (p. 473). As universities, their students, and nonprofits embrace this responsibility, they become instruments of governmentality. Using Foucault, Dennis (2009) explains that the state "transfer[s] the management of social risk to individuals and localities" as citizens monitor and surveil one another (p. 157). In short, the reach of the state is extended by "acting on intermediate actors, who then are incentivized to act on specific populations" (Dennis, 2009, p. 158). Drawing upon this notion, Raddon and Harrison (2015) assert that service learning specifically works as a strategy of governmentality. Conveniently, as the state has defunded social programs and the need for volunteering has intensified, students have become trained to replace the services once provided by the government. For instance, the Edward Kennedy Serve America Act of 2009, which uses "service as a solution in the areas of education, health, clean energy, veterans, and economic opportunity," more than tripled

the amount volunteers in service to the nation as AmeriCorps members increased from 75,000 to 250,000 (Corporation for National and Community Service, 2010). With a cadre of new jobs that paid poverty-level wages, young people have been positioned to "develop civic identities that are aligned with the priorities of the state" (Raddon & Harrison, 2015, p. 144). Moreover, universities are implicated by helping to facilitate this process. Raddon and Harrison argue:

> Universities facilitate the privatization and outsourcing of civic work to volunteers by producing socially engaged citizens with an orientation and willingness to bear the costs of caring for community. The service-learning movement is at the forefront of this cultural project of fostering and valorizing citizen-volunteer identities. (p. 145)

A point these scholars make is that part of the insidious challenge of governmentality is that those who are trained to become socially engaged actors join members of the managerial class, which determine the measurement standards for who is considered as "needing" services, what services they are allowed to have access to, and what behaviors and identities they must maintain in order to receive services. Service learners are socialized into monitoring individuals and groups, in part, because service learning arrangements (and most nonprofits) tend to draw attention to individualized needs of social service recipients rather than locating the inadequacies in the structure of social systems (Eby, 1998). Dennis (2009) contends that college students and graduates recruited into government-subsidized service programs (e.g., AmeriCorps and federally funded college service learning programs) are disciplined by the

government while also being used by the government to "monitor 'at-risk' populations" (p. 168).

Even amidst any potential good service learning does on an individual level, it still works on a systemic level to align with the state in producing neoliberal citizens who reinforce values of privatization and personal responsibility (Hyatt, 2011; Raddon & Harrison, 2015). As ploys for neoliberal capitalism, universities and nonprofits, through service learning, structure a hierarchy of value, creating citizen subjects who manage "other" bodies, thereby doing the categorizing work of the neoliberal state. The students who are educated to be and excel at becoming responsible citizens can then be measured as more valuable—or ideal—than the people who refuse, fail at, or are altogether left out of this endeavor. Acknowledging the presence of an ideal, Mitchell and Donahue (2017) point out that service learning experiences are most often developed with "ideal" students in mind. What they reference as the assumed "ideal" is white, middle-class students who have not been on the recipient end of the server-served dichotomy (Mitchell & Donahue, 2017, p. 458). However, what we see within neoliberalism is that while the ideology is often used to maintain race and class hierarchies, it also has the contradictory capacity to include various race and class identities as long as individuals' behaviors are legible to and support the state. Students do not have to be white and middle-class to be ideal citizens; people of color from all economic backgrounds are welcomed into this disciplining project as long as they are willing to conform to certain values and behaviors.

Constructing "Ideal Citizens" through Neoliberal Education

Educative efforts to create ideal citizens for participation in a democratic society and the economy is not new. As previously detailed, education has been used throughout history as a way to stratify bodies and knowledges for the combined purposes of democracy and domination (e.g., white supremacy, capitalism and nationalism). Additionally, social structures are designed to hail subjects into a citizenship that takes on particular qualities. Feminist scholar Amy Brandzel (2011) offers a succinct definition and critique of how citizen interpellation occurs:

> Citizenship is a powerful normative discursive formation that works to socialize and regulate the national body, with its most formidable disciplinary mechanism being the ongoing (and never completely fulfilled) promise of inclusion of the "other." Importantly, normative citizenship is not merely produced through legal and political action but also supported through scholarship and academic practices that adhere to—rather than question—the idealization of citizenship. (p. 518)

Brandzel (2016) points out that educational institutions are entwined in the practice of creating and idealizing a particular type of citizenship that "works to continuously mark Otherness because normative structures depend on the production of new kinds of difference" (p. 12).

In the era of neoliberalism, the normative construction and interpellation of the ideal citizen by state and educational institutions take on specific contours that are reinforced by micro- and macro-level discourse and interactions. Particularly, neoliberal ideal citizens are individuals who are responsible for and can manage not only

themselves but also others in society (Dennis, 2009). Embodying personal and civic responsibility, they maintain a "civic-minded" disposition, which requires them to be a member of a particular community about which they are well-informed and willing to act on issues that concern the well-being of the group (Steinberg, Hatcher, & Bringle, 2011). While situated in and belonging to a specific geographic community, they also are positioned to be global and thoughtful in their outlook and knowledge-base (Chapman, Ruiz-Chapman, & Elgin, 2018); they are primed to be multicultural (Melamed, 2011) as well as "emotionally literate and expressive" (Pedwell, 2012, p. 168). Ideal citizens engage in self-reflection, resulting in a self-transformation wherein they gain empathetic understanding and appreciation of various cultures. And, this greater comprehension of "other" people's cultures allows ideal citizens to realize social disparities and take responsibility to act (Pedwell, 2012). Further, ideal citizens are inclined to volunteer for the sake of the common good (National and Community Service Act, 1990).

Ironically, ideal citizens are supposed to work with others for increased knowledge and efficiency, yet also advance their individual, entrepreneurial efforts (Lakes, 208; Peters & Arthur, 2012). Additionally, ideal citizens are inspired to pursue life-long learning, partly because they need to be prepared for a changing economic environment, but also to be reflexive in their life choices (Edwards, 1998). They are supposed to be financially literate so that they can make wise purchasing decisions—which enables the competitiveness of the market—as they individually take on economic risk (Peters & Arthur, 2012).

What is important to keep in mind is that these characteristics become commonplace as social structures call subjects into these qualities. Referencing the ubiquity of neoliberal practices that shape neoliberal subjects, Tomlinson and Lipsitz (2013) assert:

> Practices and discourses from multiple cultural sources work together: neoliberal ideologies appear convincing in part because they are echoed constantly in advertising, entertainment, public relations, and political discourses. These discourses "hail" or "interpellate" subjects *as if* they are already neoliberals—or at least *ought to be*. They encourage subjects to find positions congruent with neoliberal common sense, to accept its dominance, and to position neoliberal notions as those things that are already understood, that "go without saying." *Even when subjects resist their interpellation as neoliberals, they nonetheless must "overhear" and be affected by neoliberal assumptions and arguments about the nature of social relations. Whether individual subjects notice them or not, accept them or not, these displays of dominant power are meant for everyone*. (p. 8-9, emphasis added in last two sentences)

Thus, characteristics of the ideal citizen are pervasive and deemed as common sense; the traits are desired and respected. However, through governmentality, which aims for social control and the expansion of markets, these attributes are used for purposes that entrench the combined forces of white supremacy, capitalism, and colonization. To be racialized, class-ified, and nationalized as valued within this context, people must fit within, or at the very least be working toward, the ideal citizen. Those on the outside of these parameters fall to the bottom of the hierarchy. As Ong (2006) argues, citizenship is

no longer simply considered as rights within a particular geographic region but rather as "governing strategies that promote an economic logic in defining, evaluating, and protecting certain categories of subjects and not others" (p. 16). She contends, "In some milieus, the neoliberal exception gives value to calculative practices and to self-governing subjects as preferred citizens. Meanwhile, other segments of the population are excepted from neoliberal criteria and thus rendered excludable as citizens and subjects" (p. 16). Those with the neoliberal capacities and interests to perform specific skills are considered valuable while those unable, or uninterested, are rendered unintelligible and treated as worthless. Thus, the logic follows that to know where and how people and their identities fit within the given frame, they must be constantly managed and measured. Every *thing* and every *body* is to be accounted for.

Service learning's construction of ideal citizens. In the context of service learning, qualities of ideal citizenship are outlined and then measured. Recall that the habits and identities highlighted in the Wingspread Declaration, included "interest in and knowledge of public affairs, capacities for intergroup dialogue, and the ability to work with others different from themselves on common projects and problem solving in ways that deepen appreciation of others' talents." The authors of this document consisted of representatives from universities, private foundations, civic and professional associations. Public-private partnerships (including the Johnson Foundation, which makes its money from cleaning and rodent removal supplies), hosted the conference where the Wingspread Declaration was crafted. Considering the interests of those who lead and invest in these entities, it is fairly easily to uncover embedded assumptions

about who the habits and skills are for, what public affairs matter, who constructs the frame for intergroup dialogue, and whose / which talents garner appreciation.

The Wingspread Declaration is an example of how the "normative discursive formation" of idealized citizenship (Brandzel, 2011, p. 518) within service learning was intentionally constructed. Further indications of this discursive formation are evidenced through the *processes* of service learning, which increasingly include assessment of *civic* learning outcomes (e.g., Hatcher, Bringle, & Hahn, 2017). As previously noted, much of service learning scholarship asserts that participation in civic engagement produces a host of positive outcomes for college students. These outcomes assume that there is an archetypical, unitary learner for whom certain practices yield definitive results (Michelson, 1999). Even though these outcomes are difficult to actually measure, attention is increasingly paid to them. The reality that students' experiences are not unitary is ignored. Further, the power dynamics embedded in the discourses and interactions of the practice are dismissed. Despite the limits of assessment and the power differentials involved, measurement has not halted. Instead, universities have doubled-down on their efforts to account for civic engagement. Namely, the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) has created a VALUE Rubric[3] to measure civic engagement learning outcomes. The rubric evaluates learning required to prepare students for "successful participation in civic life and the global economy" (Rhodes & Finley, 2013, p. v). The Civic Engagement VALUE Rubric, which is

[3] VALUE stands for Value Assessment of Learning in Undergraduate Education (AAC&U). VALUE Rubrics have been created for 15 "Essential Learning Outcomes" in addition to Civic Engagement (Rhodes & Finley, 2013, p. 1).

increasingly used to measure the "knowledge, skills, values, and motivations" of service learners, addresses competence as it applies to civic action in six domains: diversity, disciplinary knowledge, civic identity and commitment, communication, leadership, and collaboration (AAC&U, 2009). Using a four-tiered numeric ranking, from benchmark to capstone, this rubric illuminates the predetermined outcomes of what citizenship entails as it focuses on requirements individual learners take to "make a difference" by "promoting the quality of life in a community" (AAC&U, 2009).

Yet, the workings behind "mak[ing] a difference" are masked. Take the following example. Within the rubric, a person who galvanizes neighbors to call police officers complaining about houseless people lying on the sidewalk or camping in public parks could be measured as contributing just as much to the civic life of the community as the person who organizes people to lobby against ordinances that criminalize houselessness. Presuming that actions impacting "quality of life" are inherently worthy and void of power neglects how those actions may work to benefit hegemonic conceptions of what a quality life is, and thus whose perspectives about that quality life are taken seriously. Is a quality life one where community members have access to sidewalks and parks without having to deal with the troubling aspects of houslessness, like piles of personal belongings in public space or pungent smells of body odor and waste? Or, is a quality life one wherein houseless people are not criminalized for utilizing public space in an extremely stratified society that makes housing, health care, and employment precarious at best and unattainable at worst? Whose quality of life is privileged and how? Perhaps the authors of the Civic Engagement VALUE Rubric would suggest a middle ground. Yet, even so, are the people in both camps idealized as

civically engaged actors while those laying on the sidewalk and in parks are considered void of civic aptitude? What I am pointing to is that the emphasis on measuring people's proficiency in civic engagement creates yet another avenue for a hierarchy of value to be employed, thereby privileging certain people over others without taking into consideration the social and political contexts that have shaped the agency that people are able, interested in, and willing to take. Amidst the evaluation, where is the analysis of why people may resist or be unable to abide by and succeed within these norms? Additionally, the parameters for who has access to this type of education that creates and shapes the citizenry is ignored.

Thus, there are problems with service learning's presumption (in practice, assessment, and scholarship) of civic participation, civic-ness, and citizenship as inherently good. Chávez (2013) warns that there is "tension between citizenship's perpetual exclusions and its alluring promises" as it "simultaneously mobilizes people and acts of resistance and erases some of those same people, dissident actions, and colonial pasts and presents" (p. 13). She points to how citizenship is used as a "double discourse" that catalyzes people to fight for their rights and for inclusion while also creating boundaries to exclude what is seen as too far out of the normative sphere (p. 13). In this way, citizenship wedges a division between those who otherwise might act in solidarity.

Most service learning scholarship does not consider the parameters of who is perennially left out of citizenship. Nor does it examine the way in which the construction and realization of ideal citizens helps to reproduce and strengthen the nation's unjust systems. Reinforced divisions of race, class, and nation-based hierarchies are overlooked

in the process of citizen creation. Additionally, the individualized focus of measuring students' civic learning outcomes ignores that at the structural level, the state continues to weave its governing tentacles into institutions and individuals, asking schools and people to monitor themselves and one another in order to maintain acceptable boundaries of social control (Dennis, 2009). Or, as Brandzel (2016) asserts, "the governmentality of citizenship promotes and teaches self-governance through self-disciplining operations whereby subjects learn to see themselves as citizens through the material practices of citizen-like behaviors and attitudes" (p. 13).

I contend that service learning has become an integral part of this accounting and evaluation process as normative discourses have hailed college students into subjectivities that obligate them to aid those deemed worthy of care and to help those expected to assimilate. Further, these discourses have set the parameters for what service learning projects are considered acceptable. For instance, it is acceptable for service learners to be tutors and mentors to younger students but not join with young graffiti artists who disturb visual landscapes in areas of gentrification. It is permissible to feed houseless people, but not erect tents in city parks in a solidarity effort of protesting the criminalization of houselessness. It is standard to teach English to immigrants for citizenship exams but not block Immigration and Customs Enforcement from sending immigrants to detention centers. It is suitable to learn about Indigenous knowledge systems for the perpetuation of culture but not use the knowledge to protest the state's occupation and militarization of Indigenous land.

Service Learning as a Racial Project

When attending to the power dynamics within service learning, one of the mechanisms exposed is the process of racial formation. Omi and Winant (2015) assert that race is a "master category" that is socially constructed and constantly shifts based on the context (p. viii). Because race simultaneously shapes and is shaped by individuals and society, Omi and Winant describe race as "operat[ing]…at the crossroads where social structure and experience meet" (p. x). This dynamic process of race—how it is represented and experienced at all levels of social life—is what they refer to as racial formation. Omi and Winant specifically define racial formation as "the sociohistorical process by which racial identities are created, lived out, transformed, and destroyed" (p. 109). This means that how people experience and perceive of race is determined by representations of race as well as social structures. Reiteratively, people also shape the representations and structures that determine racial experiences. Of course, not everyone experiences or thinks about race the same. Instead, a variety of additional identities and interactions intersect with race to influence how people experience exploitation and resistance within personal encounters as well as policies and social systems.

To illustrate how the process of racial formation occurs, Omi and Winant use the concept of racial projects, which have two main characteristics: 1) they represent racial identities, and 2) they aim to organize and distribute resources via racial lines. Examples of racial projects include everything from policing the U.S.-Mexico border and racialized mass incarceration to Affirmative Action and protests against police brutality. Racial projects can be large or small, individual or collective. They are neither

exclusively racist nor antiracist; rather, they can only be judged by whether they reproduce or disrupt structures of racial domination.

With Omi and Winant's definition of racial formation, service learning can be understood as a racial project. Namely, service learning is used to demarcate racial identity and to distribute resources, thereby also reproducing material and nonmaterial culture. Typically, white, middle-class college students are sent into lower-income, communities of color to perform community service, which relies upon historically-laden racial signifiers of missionary efforts (Butin, 2006; Green, 2003). Mirroring the racial projects of U.S. philanthropists and Christian missionaries offering education to Indigenous peoples all over the world and "civilizing" opportunities to black people during Reconstruction (Grande, 2004; Watkins, 2001), the divisions of server and served have been (not absolutely, but) fairly distinctly divided along racial and economic lines. And while the service learners have some agency as to whether they will assume the position similar to that of the missionary, they carry out the assignments that are expected of them within the educational field. The option of resisting a service learning assignment jeopardizes a student's grade but also disrupts the commonsense notion that the instructor knows best and puts students in optimal contexts for learning.

Reflecting a racial project, service learning also takes part in the distribution of resources, particularly in knowledge distribution. For instance, the knowledge valued within formal educational institutions (cultural capital) is emphasized and shared through tutoring in after-school programs or in citizen preparation classes. Other valued knowledge comes through the bodies of college students. This knowledge, which consists of particular behaviors, attitudes, and beliefs (e.g., discipline, hard work,

meritocracy) equips people for college while disguising as a colorblind racial project, (Au, 2016; Chen & Buell, 2018; Rhee, 2013). In short, whiteness hides behind the values of hard work and discipline for formal educational advancement. These meritocratic values dismiss the ways in which social structures systematically discriminate and make effort and self-control subjective, unstable, and unequal.

Extending the concept of racial formation, Rhee (2013) provides a neoliberal dimension to show how the current economic context shapes race and racism. Namely, she examines the way in which the concept of governmentality influences racial formation. Rhee asserts that racial formation occurs via processes of governing—both internally and externally—in ways that largely remain unnoticeable. The "neoliberal racial project," as she names it, "works to incorporate populations, particularly the formerly colonized, to be useful economically and politically" (Rhee, 2013, p. 566). The state interpellates people of color into neoliberal subjects who are thought to act of their own volition. However, their incorporation into the hegemonic system is really only meant to pacify them since most people of color still experience political and material inequality. This conception of a neoliberal racial project is helpful in considering how service learning hails college students into ideal citizens.

Research Questions

Broadly, this study examines how issues of social injustice, which include white supremacy, capitalism, and colonization, are taught and (un)learned within college service learning experiences, especially when the practice is connected to discursive practices and material realities that have reproduced a stratified valuation of bodies and knowledges. More specifically, I ask:

1) How are discourses and practices used to create ideal citizens? In what ways are ideal citizens raced, classed, and nationalized?
2) How do resistances and subversions to the ideal citizen take shape?

I illuminate how discourses and interactions work to shape and resist the ideal citizen. Rather than focus on the measurement of the ideal citizen, I interrogate the processes behind how the concept and material reality of the ideal citizen is created. Attending to the various discourses and interactions within service learning reveals how the practice and the actors within it support and subvert an idealized citizenry wherein hierarchical valuations of bodies, knowledge, values, and behaviors are used for social control. These interactions are recursively involved in contestations around how the formation of race, class, citizen, and nation happens, what it means, and what it does.

I conclude that attending to the discourses and interactions within service learning helps us to better comprehend the nuances of power in the re/production of culture—including moments of resistance—that take place as a university partners with nonprofits in creating experiential learning opportunities for college students. In the processes of tutoring elementary and middle school students, advocating for better working conditions for union members, and restoring Native Hawaiian cultural sites, college students are called into a subjectivity of civic and social responsibility in democracy. Yet, the contours of this democracy are predominantly shaped by the discourses that officials within the university and nonprofits invoke. This rhetoric, which has been influenced by historical and political contexts, has implications for how the ideal citizen is positioned within the continued formation of race, class, and the nation. Specifically, we can see the efforts made to exclude as well as assimilate certain bodies

and knowledges into dominant modes within the neoliberal framework. This examination highlights how the state and its institutions work to build a labor force that maintains social control of its subjects—a social control that acquiesces to increased capitalism and reinforces the social / civic responsibility required for providing basic necessities of life to people, at least those who are deemed worthy of life.

CHAPTER THREE

Familiar and Foreign: Implicated Research(er)

Overview of critical ethnography

Critical ethnography is the primary methodology I employ in this study. Ethnography offers a way to provide "thick," detailed, and complex descriptions of people and their lived realities (Geertz, 1973, p. 10). Zooming in to depict interpersonal interactions and narratives, ethnographers link what occurs at the micro-level to macro-level systems within society (Anderson, 1989). Ethnography has been used to gain a greater understanding of various cultures and identities (Tierney, 1992; Yon, 2000); explore how people employ their agency to negotiate overarching societal structures (Willis, 1977; MacLeod, 2009); offer counterstories to stereotypical representations of people (Jackson & Wingfield, 2013); and illustrate the ways in which oppressive systems reproduce the hegemonic social order (Rist, 1973; Vaught, 2011).

Despite ethnography's ability to describe the nuanced textures of contexts and relationships, its use is quite contentious. The methodology has been employed to colonize and exploit Indigenous and marginalized peoples, robbing them of local knowledge and relationships (Minh-ha, 1989). These stolen and highly valued resources have been used to essentialize, misrepresent, and further colonize communities, all while ethnographers have gained greater status within academia (Smith, 2012). In an attempt to ameliorate the methodology's transgressions, scholars have attempted to heed insights from feminist, postcolonial, and poststructural theories that challenge colonial and essentialized accounts of culture as well as the process of knowledge extraction. Foundational within critical ethnography is developing trusting relationships with

participants that allow for reciprocity (Brown & Dorbrin, 2004). Moreover, critical theories have called for changes to how researchers think about and present the social dimensions of people's lives so that the culture and identity of both the researcher and those being researched is represented as multiple, intersectional, contradictory, and constantly in-flux rather than unitary and static (Anderson, 1989; Collins 2015; Conquergood, 1991; Lather, 2007; Yon, 2003). Committed to addressing social stratification by exposing the concealed interplay of culture, structure, agency, and power, and by taking political stances that resist domination, critical ethnographers aim to be reflexive so as to be aware of the ideologies and epistemologies that influence them, their interactions, and the claims they make (Carspecken, 1996; Kincheloe & McLaren, 2002; Madison, 2005).

Critical ethnographies have been used within higher education to interrogate how the structure of institutions work to sustain the status quo. While these studies within higher education are few in number, the methodology is even more scant within service learning scholarship. More common to qualitative service learning research are studies of student interviews and/or analysis of students' written reflections. These studies tend to focus on student learning outcomes, including students' perceptions of race and class (see Becker & Paul, 2015; Lee & Espino, 2010; Seider, Huguley, & Novick, 2013). Studies that offer in-depth detail and analysis of community sites are limited. Additionally, the literature often ignores community perspectives—the very people the pedagogy relies on in order to function (Stoecker, Tryon, & Hilgendorf, 2009).

The connection between service learning and critical ethnography provides an interesting angle and paradox. On the one hand, examining service learning interactions

at a micro-level can uncover the ways in which language, attitudes, and behaviors work to reinforce and disrupt material, cultural, and discursive inequities. On the other hand, this connection also forces us to attend to the common histories of service and ethnography, both of which are rooted in colonization, essentialism, and assertions of racial, moral, and spiritual supremacy. Offering a unique perspective of the common points between ethnography and service learning, Himley (2004) suggests that both ethnographers and service learners attempt to build relationships with "strangers." While Himley's work is not an ethnographic study of service learning, it is a smart and critical take on the challenges embedded within service learning and ethnography. Namely, she notes that both ethnographers and service learners "need" the participation of people in the community in order to complete their work; that both usurp knowledge from the community for their own academic advancement; that they both gain cultural capital from their engagement and service with the community; that given their status within academic institutions, they both have greater access to border crossing than do the participants with whom they engage; that they both have the ability to maintain authorship when writing about their encounters; and that given the emphasis that both have on self-reflexivity, there is an assumption that their accounts are going to be less colonial in nature than positivistic research. Regrettably, the striking resemblances of ethnography and service learning have the potential to layer the problematic, hierarchical assumptions embedded within each, thereby creating a more deeply entrenched practice of injustice while maintaining a surface-level discourse of criticality.

From another perspective, however, the similarities, like same poles of a magnet, may have the potential to repel, or undo, the dubious characteristics of one another. In

other words, if we employ a critical lens to both ethnography and service learning, with constant attention on the complex and shifting power dynamics within the research and the pedagogy, there remain possibilities to point out hypocrisies, paradoxes, and limits while simultaneously engaging in conscientious practices that disrupt stratification and the forces behind it. Opportunities abound within service learning contexts to critically explore the tensions between structure and agency; highlight the multiple, shifting, and contradictory identities and perspectives of students and community members; take political stances that radically disrupt hegemonic forces within institutions of higher education; and practice self-reflexivity that attends to the intricate ways in which researchers and service learners are implicated in reproducing injustices.

Many studies that use critical ethnography focus on marginalized populations. Some scholars, however, assert that examining the people and contexts in positions of relative privilege and dominance may also prove insightful to exposing and attempting to dismantle unjust systems (Becker & Aielle, 2013). Rhoads' (1995) study of a university fraternity is one example of studying power in a way that does not center a minoritized population and yet still interrogates dominant narratives and practices. Similar to Rhoad's study, critically examining the power dynamics within university-level service learning has the possibility for revealing the nuances, tensions, and paradoxes of an increasingly utilized pedagogy within higher education.

The current study

Through critical ethnography I see the opportunity to deeply nuance the limits and potential of service learning by detailing the macro-level context in which the pedagogy is situated and linking it with the micro-level interactions that take place

during discussions among and with students, faculty, and site coordinators. Exploring the paradoxes and contradictions of service learning in higher education through a methodology that attends to the intricacies of social interactions and the expansiveness of complex systems can expose the ways in which white supremacy, capitalism, and colonization have been entrenched within the same university systems that have engendered the possibilities for social movements that resist hegemonic domination.

With these ideals in mind, I used critical ethnography (Emerson, Fretz & Shaw, 2011; Kincheloe & McLaren, 2002) in this study of service learning at a public university in the Pacific. This institution was classified as a Minority Serving Institution (MSI). Prior to embarking on this year-long study, I was a participant-observer in two upper-division service learning courses at this university. The semester was helpful as I became familiar with the service learning staff and instructors, conducted informational interviews, thought through the parameters of the study, and applied for university IRB at this institution (University of Minnesota IRB had already been acquired.) University IRB approval (exempt status, at both universities) was obtained to observe courses and community sites, interview administrators, faculty, students, and site coordinators, and read students' written coursework, all upon the written consent of participants (all pseudonyms).

The setting. This study took place within Hawai‘i. The Kingdom of Hawai‘i was an independent nation for about a century before the U.S. overtook its government. A relationship between the U.S. and the Kingdom of Hawai‘i started in the early nineteenth century when missionaries came to the islands to spread Christianity. Simultaneously, business interests between the two nations grew, first as trading

partners, and then with descendants of U.S. missionaries creating and running sugar and pineapple plantations on the islands. With strategic military and business interests, the U.S. illegally overthrew the Kingdom of Hawai‘i by imprisoning the queen of the monarchy in 1893 (Chock, 1995; La Croix & Grandy, 1997; Morgon, 2011). In 1898, the U.S. annexed the Hawaiian Islands as a U.S. territory. Due to this history and the story's incorporation into tourist sites and university classrooms, most undergraduate students, whether raised in Hawai‘i or not, were familiar with the term "colonization." Even though some students may not have remembered much more about the specifics of Hawai‘i's contentious relationship with the U.S., there was a common understanding within local culture that just a few generations ago, people from the U.S. mainland took land from Indigenous people; devalued Native Hawaiian language and cultural practices through missionary schools; positioned the islands as a popular tourist destination; and installed multiple military bases and training sites on some of the most sacred Hawaiian lands.

Relaying this history was particularly prominent within the university's Department of Ethnic Studies. This was also the department that utilized service learning most consistently. Each Ethnic Studies course either required or had an option to engage in service learning. The department's commitment to community engagement and social justice was historical and intentional as the department was born out of struggle. Amidst resistance to land and housing evictions in the 1970s, local community members demanded a place at the university where they could learn "our history, our way" (Aoudé, 1999, p. xix). Prior to 1970, university curricula had a Eurocentric focus. Frustrated with the singular, Eurocentric focus, a contingent of students and faculty

wanted an opportunity to study and present alternatives to the colonizers' viewpoint, particularly ones that represented more of their respective ethnic communities' perspectives. Despite opposition from "the local power structure" of the legislature and the university, which was ethnically diverse but prioritized development and capitalism over many people's needs, approval was granted for an Ethnic Studies Program (Aoudé, 1999, p. xvii-xviii). Ideologically opposed to the political priorities of capitalism and development, the program's faculty members and students engaged in community protests. For instance, they rallied against home evictions and the development of agricultural lands for resorts and subdivisions (Trask, 1987). Faculty and student involvement in the community outside the university—and the process of connecting those experiences to academic work—became a foundational and enduring feature of the Ethnic Studies' curriculum as the program, somewhat precariously, paved a route to becoming a university department.

Because of the department's commitments to critical perspectives, community partnerships, and service learning, as well as the fact that the director of the service learning office taught within that same department, I chose to conduct my research with instructors and courses within Ethnic Studies, and the community sites associated with them.

Service learning courses. Each of the six service learning courses in this study were classified as Ethnic Studies courses and utilized at least one of the service learning sites discussed in this study. Four of the courses were traditional face-to-face, semester-long courses in that they met weekly for a total of two and a half hours (150 minutes). One course met once per week, two met twice per week, and one met three times per

week. Three of the courses were upper-division and one was a lower-division course. All but one of the classes were capped at 20 students; the other class had over 70 students and was a part of a college access initiative. This initiative gave university access to local high school students who fell below regular admission requirements. Upon successful completion of their first semester, which required the Introduction to Ethnic Studies course (and thus a service learning project), the students' status would change from conditional acceptance to full admittance to the university.

Each of these four courses were also traditional in that the pedagogy used, in addition to service learning, included a combination of lectures, videos, guest lecturers, small and large group discussions. Additionally, in all the courses, there were students who talked more than others; students who were completely engaged with the course material, and a few who were not; and necessary changes made to the syllabus when there was a misunderstanding between the instructor and the students as to what was scheduled for the day.

In these four courses, the curriculum focused on a variety of social justice issues, both locally and elsewhere. For example, the desecration and dispossession of Indigenous land by government and business interests were discussed. Historical examples often referenced the role of the "Big Five," the major sugar and pineapple plantation corporations whose owners intermarried with Hawaiian royalty, and eventually, advocated for the overthrow of the monarchy (Trask, 1987). Another historical example of colonization and resistance to it shared in the courses was the process of land development and evictions during the 1970s. Particularly, faculty shared with students about the protests that occurred in response to the evictions and

development and how these protests coincided with the formation of the Ethnic Studies Department. This example was invoked as a way to encourage current students to follow in the footsteps of their predecessors who were instrumental in creating social change.

The other two courses in this study (one in the fall semester and one in the spring) were similar to an internship course in that class meetings were infrequent and the field work was substantial. The syllabi for these two courses, which I refer to as Experiential Work, emphasized "research and work in the field" and gave students "real-life perspectives" on "important issues of our time." Students had options to enroll in a range of one to six credits in exchange for 25 to 100 hours of service work. The first credit required 25 hours, each additional credit required 15 more service hours. The intent for this course was to hold group meetings once or twice a month with individual meetings with the instructor scheduled in between. However, given the instructor's busy schedule and the difficulty of finding a common meeting time for everyone, this was next to impossible. The reality was that there were a few loosely scheduled individual meetings with the instructor (usually three over the course of the term) and a group meeting at the end of the semester where the students would engage in a reflection on their service learning work.

For some students, the Experiential Work courses served as a type of academic insurance for students who needed additional credits to graduate or maintain their credit-bearing status with the university when they experienced an individual or family crisis. For instance, during what was supposed to be students' last semester of college, some students were met with the surprise that they needed two more credits to graduate. However, by the time they received this news from their academic counselor, it was too

late to enroll in most other courses. In another example, a student became sick early in the semester. While most of her instructors were able to offer extensions on class assignments, it was too difficult to catch up in her statistics course. Because she needed to drop the course, her credits fell below full-time status, which made her ineligible to stay in on-campus housing. She needed an alternative to boost the credits she was taking to full-time. The ability to take the Experiential Work service learning course influenced her university housing, her tuition, and her credits. As the Experiential Work courses offered the flexibility of being able to enroll at almost any point in the semester, the courses provided an important safety net for students.

Even though the Experiential Work (EW) courses also fell within the Ethnic Studies Department, the logistical differences between them and the traditional courses greatly impacted the curricular differences. In addition to not having course readings or regularly-scheduled class discussions with an instructor and peers, students determined a research project that combined their site work with their own disciplinary interests. Since most of the students were majoring in a field other than Ethnic Studies, their research projects tended to be framed more by their discipline (e.g., psychology majors would use their service work in after-school tutoring programs to compare the social and emotional differences between youth of various backgrounds). The students came up with their project through their one-on-one conversations with the instructor. This allowed the students to tailor their research project to fit their own academic interests.

Service learning sites. The three service learning projects included in this study were distinct in their design, type of faculty and university involvement, political orientation, positioning of students, and tasks engaged. According to official university

materials, the common element of the service learning projects was that students were expected to have "community" experiences that addressed "capacious issues" in the "real-world" (College of Social Sciences, n.d.). In the process, students were to develop the "skills needed to work with the community," which was viewed as "good preparation for citizenship, work, and life" (College of Social Sciences, n.d.). The community partners that students worked with were considered to be formal organizations that had been vetted by the service learning office. This was partly for a certain kind of quality assurance (making sure that the organization understood the parameters of the students' learning needs) but also for university liability issues. There was a Memorandum of Understanding developed between the university and each community partner site.

Bright Horizons Tutoring. Service learners working with Bright Horizons Tutoring program (n=7), were placed at one of the following sites: Valley Elementary School, Valley Middle School, or the Valley Learning Center, a community center with an after-school program. The university service learning office had a long working relationship with each of the sites in Bright Horizons Tutoring. The services sites, all located in a lush, green valley not far from the university, sat amidst a neighborhood comprised of many public and subsidized housing units. The majority of the population in the neighborhood, and thus at the schools and community center, were Pacific Islander. Many of the families fairly recently migrated from various parts of Micronesia. Through Bright Horizons Tutoring, the college students engaged elementary and middle school students in homework help and various other activities.

MOBILIZE!. Service learners at MOBILIZE! (n=3) attended meetings to learn about community organizing and advocacy, joined in actions outside of union members'

work places to demand better working conditions, and supported the unions' legislative efforts. The union, which encompassed many hotel workers, described itself as an "organizing union." Associated with the union was a group of non-union community members called the Activists. Service learners were typically connected to the Activists since it was an easy way to include non-union members in supporting the union's community organizing efforts.

Mālama ʻĀina Program. The *Mālama ʻĀina* Program offered workdays at Native Hawaiian cultural sites most weekends of the semester, often on both Saturdays and Sundays. A couple sites that were regularly staffed also had opportunities to volunteer during the week. At each site, service learners engaged in manual labor by removing invasive species and other tasks more specific to the site. They also took a tour of the site, heard *moʻolelo* (Hawaiian stories), and shared a meal together. Service learners engaged with the *Mālama ʻĀina* Program (n=20) were asked to attend at least one workday at a lowland, midland, and upland site in order to get a sense of how the Native Hawaiian land division system (*ahupuaʻa*) worked. If a student had prior experience within the program, they could choose to specialize in one area (e.g., some students chose to work solely at lowland sites).

Data Collection

Prior to commencing IRB approved data collection, I met with various people at the university who were familiar with service learning efforts. These meetings helped me in finding the appropriate connections for IRB sponsorship. In the midst of these meetings, I was invited to observe two service learning courses for the duration of the Spring 2017 semester. While I had University of Minnesota IRB at the time, I did not yet

have IRB approval for the university where I was doing the observations. Thus, the information from the two service learning courses in Spring 2017 were not explicitly included in this study, although they informed my perspective and my research approach. I officially collected data from August 2017 through September 2018. In this year-long study, I was a participant-observer in six service learning courses and three service learning projects.

Participants. Participants in this study included college students (n=52), service learning instructors (n=5), service learning site coordinators (n=8), and university administrators (n=2). Most participants in the study were people of color (students: n=43; instructors: n=3; site coordinators: n=7; university administrators: n=1). While I did not explicitly ask for people's racial or ethnic identification, and thus cannot provide a disaggregated breakdown, an important reality was that this was not the typical university service learning study where the majority of the students, faculty, and site coordinators identified as white.

Recruitment occurred in segments. I initially approached the director of the service learning office for information as to which instructors were planning to use service learning in the upcoming semester. Because some instructors offered service learning as an option (in exchange for having to write a research paper), not all classes had a significant amount of service learners. Dee, the director of the service learning office, recommended approaching instructors who either required service learning or who strongly encouraged it to their students. She also suggested instructors and courses that aligned with my research questions. In other words, if she knew that the course would cover topics of colonization, capitalism, or racism, she directed me to those courses.

After giving me a handful of instructor names to approach, I emailed the instructors, explained that I was conducting research for a dissertation, and asked if they would allow me to be a participant-observer in their course. I noted that at some point, I would need about 10 minutes of class time to introduce myself to the students, letting them know about my research project, and inviting them to be a part of it.

Once approval from the instructors was granted, I became a participant-observer of the course. I introduced my research project to students, including handing out a sheet that described my research and inviting them to participate. No one approached me with their interest, but over the course of the semester, as I made small talk with students in class and interacted with them at service learning sites, I approached some students to sit down with me to tell me more about their experiences. As a slight incentive, I offered to help students think through what they planned to write about for their final reflections and/or proofread drafts of their final papers. Instructors were kind enough to encourage their students to take me up on my offer since they said I had "thought quite a bit about service learning." I did not aim to interview all students in each of the courses, but was happy to interview anyone who was willing to participate. I requested interviews with the instructors after the semester that I observed their course. After I was done collecting data on service learning courses, I asked two administrators for interviews, both of whom strongly supported service learning.

My initial visits to sites happened with the service learning director during an orientation or a service learning workday. Dee introduced me to site coordinators in person and then granted me permission to use her name when I followed up with them via the email contact she gave me. After I had visited the site at least a couple of times, I

asked site coordinators for interviews. Note that there were a few site supervisors who I did not get to meet in person and who did not respond to my email requests to meet with them for an interview (recall that the *Mālama ʻĀina* Program and Bright Horizons Tutoring had multiple sites within the same project). Thus, those site coordinators were not featured in the study. However, there were times when the college students referred to them. So, there are three site coordinators who appear in the study via students' comments, but not via in-depth interview.

College students. I gained consent from 52 student participants and interviewed 47. I specifically focused on students who were engaged in service learning at the three focal sites (n=30). Most of the college students ranged in age from 18 to 26. A couple of students were in their thirties. Students in the courses held a variety of ethnic and racial backgrounds, most identifying with a combination of ethnic backgrounds. Students with Native Hawaiian ancestry tended to emphasize their Hawaiian connection, even if they also had additional ethnic heritage. If students did not identify as Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, they typically identified with Asian (e.g., Japanese, Korean, Chinese, Filipino, or a combination of) or Latinx ancestry. A small number of students (n=5) identified as white; two of these students were from European countries.

Students were majoring in a variety of disciplines, including Ethnic Studies, Hawaiian Studies, Biology, Psychology, and Sociology, among others. All of the students were taking credit-bearing Ethnic Studies courses that required between 15 to 55 service hours (the larger number of hours were associated with the Experiential Work course).

Many students held jobs or internships in addition to their academic coursework and service learning requirements. Some lived on campus; a few lived in apartments off

campus with friends; and others lived at home with their families, making fairly long commutes to campus. Because traffic on the island was very congested during prime commuting times (e.g., it could take easily take 90 minutes to drive 35 miles), one student shared that she left her house between 4:30am and 5:00am to miss traffic on her drive to campus. Once she parked, she would stay in her car to either sleep or finish homework prior to her 8:00am class.

Instructors. The instructors who were participants in this study (n=5) were all associated with the Ethnic Studies Department and had been teaching within it for many years. One of the instructors had been with the department since its founding in 1970. Each of the instructors were involved in various community organizations and efforts outside of the university. Additionally, they all voiced criticism of university decisions at various points in time (especially regarding the proposed building of a university-sponsored telescope on top of a local mountain), but were deeply engaged in improving the university in one way or another, particularly when it came to university access and experience for students. Each instructor taught a different course within the study except for one instructor who taught the same EW course in both the Fall and Spring semesters. I formally interviewed four instructors and had informational meetings with the instructor of the EW courses.

Instructors made themselves available to students either during office hours or informally before or after class to chat individually about specific questions. Often, these conversations included students asking if they could do their service learning at a site where they already had an established relationship, but the site was not associated with the service learning office. The instructor would listen to the student, recommend that

they speak with the director of the service learning office first, and then if the student persisted, the instructor would let the student connect with the site of their choosing.

Site coordinators. I interviewed a total of eight site coordinators, two of which were not involved with the focal sites but offered important insights for the university's service learning partnerships. From each of the three focal service learning projects, I interviewed two site coordinators. Site coordinators associated with the three focal sites had been working at the organization for a number of years and were very familiar with the service learning director and some of the Ethnic Studies' instructors.

Data Sources

As is common in ethnographic work, data was collected from a variety of sources. I conducted participant-observations and in-depth interviews as well as collected artifacts from websites and each of the places in which I was a participant-observer.

Participant-observations. I was a participant-observer in service learning courses, at service learning sites, and at various meetings with instructors. I joined each traditional semester-long course (16 weeks) within the first few weeks of instruction and attended class sessions for the duration of the semester. For the Fall semester Experiential Work course, I attended the end-of-semester reflection meeting; for the Spring semester Experiential Work course, I attended class meetings at midterm (this was the first group meeting) and at the end of the semester. In total, I spent about 125 hours observing courses over the duration of the academic year.

To better understand how the community sites worked, I visited each site a minimum of two times. Site visits varied in length with shorter visits lasting about two

hours and longer visits lasting up to four or five hours. In total I spent approximately 75 hours at the three focal sites in this study. Additionally, I was a participant-observer in multiple meetings, including institutes on how to focus service learning efforts toward environmental sustainability, meetings on data management, a handful of staff and faculty meetings, campus-wide service learning / volunteer fairs, and numerous informal conversations with instructors and service learning office staff. Those meetings and informal conversations complemented routine observations and added an extra 50 hours in the field. Thus, my time "in the field" (apart from in-depth interviews) totaled approximately 250 hours over the course of the academic year.

During each class and community site visit, I jotted notes, and after the experiences, I typed field notes to detail the observations. I also wrote analytic and reflective memos. Because my own perspectives of the classroom and the community sites were different from the participants, in both field notes and memos I demarcated my own thoughts from students' comments and interactions. With this style of memoing, as I went back through the data, I could recursively think about the analytic frames I was using, and I could see where my subjectivity was being triggered and more strongly shaping my perceptions of the data. Additionally, with detailed field notes and memos, I could easily be carried back into the classroom or community site as I re-read, remembering where I was positioned in relation to students, the chuckles, small and awkward conversations I attempted with students, and the excitement and struggles students shared with me about an assignment they were working on for class.

Admittedly, for students, it was probably a little weird that a researcher old enough to be their parent was sitting in on their classes. To begin to build relationships

with students, as much as possible, I arrived five to ten minutes before class and made small talk with the students around me. Sometimes the students asked me how I was doing and how my research was coming along. Even though I was a researcher, I also positioned myself as the student I was, sharing frustrations about deadlines, challenges in writing, feeling behind on my work, or anticipation for spring break. In this way, we could relate with one another as they experienced similar things as students. During class I mostly listened and took extensive hand-written notes, but sometimes I would share a thought or question. By voicing my perspective, students could hear a bit about what I was thinking and possibly better relate to me. I also stayed after class to continue conversations with students, or more likely, with the instructor to debrief pedagogical strategy or a point raised during class. Understandably, it could also be awkward for the instructor that a researcher was observing their class. This had implications for their teaching. Sometimes when the instructor looked at me in the midst of class, I wondered if they were somehow seeking my approval. One instructor told me that he thought having me in the classroom made his teaching better. He said that he tried to teach toward me, especially since many of his students were hesitant to speak in class.

At site visits, I participated in the work, just as the students did. If students were assisting with math homework, picketing in front of a hotel with union members, or moving boulders and weeding invasive species, so was I. Sometimes I sparked up conversation with those around me; other times, I simply did the work and silently observed. I tried to pay attention to all of the small interactions around me as well as appreciate the newness of the experience and what it might be like for students who were experiencing their first service learning project. Similar to what many students

participating in the *Mālama ʻĀina* Program disclosed, often times, the last thing I wanted to do on a Saturday morning was wake up early and drive 30 minutes to a location where I knew I would be engaging in manual labor for a good three to four hours. In addition to the physical exertion, it required emotional energy. Both the students and I knew we would be amidst a large group and may only recognize a couple of people from class. The same slight hesitation accompanied me on other site visits as well. Engaging with people, especially when unfamiliar with the expectations or the script, took energy. Instructors commented on how part of the goal of service learning was to simply encourage students to get out of their own worlds and interact with other people. Students dutifully performed the tasks asked of them; however, the interactions required were likely easier for extroverts.

The last month of the semester, after the students were familiar with me from both class and participating in service, I asked students to sit down with me to share more about their experiences.

In-depth interviews. In-depth interviews took place with college student service learners, instructors, site coordinators, and administrators. I conducted a total of 60 interviews: students (n=47), instructors (n=5), site coordinators (n=8), and university administrators (n=2). Interviews lasted an average of 69 minutes.

When I interviewed students, I posed open-ended questions, asking them to share about the families and communities they grew up in, the values that shaped them, their prior experiences of service and service learning, what they were doing in their current service learning, what they were learning in the course, and how they connected course work to the service experience. As students shared, I would ask follow up questions.

Sometimes this was to gain clarity about what they were saying. At other times, I bounced ideas off them to see how they considered ideas I had been thinking about that connected a course concept to the service site (e.g., the idea of invasive species as a metaphor for colonization). Positivist-leaning researchers might view this as leading the interviewee. But since the very presence of the researcher shapes the space and influences what participants say and how they say it, I view this type of interview as being relational so that the researcher and participant can co-construct knowledge (Kvale & Brinkman, 2009).

Students often asked me if their answers matched the information I was seeking. I conveyed that I did not think there were right or wrong answers to the questions I posed. Rather, I sought to engage in a conversation with participants about important ideas and how they thought about and experienced those ideas. Part of the reason that students were encouraged to meet with me is because their instructors told them it would be an opportunity for them to think deeper about their service learning and assist them in writing their final reflections. Thus, being able to engage in a conversation with the students was partly a pedagogical tool designed to stimulate critical reflection.

In-depth interviews with site coordinators and instructors included a question about the families and communities they grew up in but then shifted to questions about how they came to be in their current position and how they learned about service learning. I also asked them what they hoped the students learned and experienced from service learning as well as how they felt service learning worked for the community organization. Instructors and site coordinators alike shared what went well and also were critical of themselves, disclosing how they thought they could do more or do things

differently to enhance students' learning experiences. I only heard a couple of critiques from site coordinators about how the university heavily relied on the work of nonprofit leaders to provide un-remunerated learning experiences for students. These site coordinators, who were from organizations that were not focal sites in this study, questioned if the site received enough in exchange from the university to warrant all of the time and energy they offered for students' learning. On the flip side, all of the site coordinators from the focal sites voiced their appreciation for the connection with Dee and the service learners who came their way each semester. At Bright Horizons Tutoring and the *Mālama ʻĀina* Program in particular, the work of college students greatly assisted the organizations' operations.

When I asked the site coordinators, instructors, and students if they had any questions of me, many asked me more about what my research entailed and how I had been thinking about service learning and the service sites. In response, I would openly share with them some of my latest thinking, the questions I had been left with, and how I was trying to make sense of it all. Overall, they seemed interested and wanted to be helpful to me in my research. They would often come back to their own ideas as I talked about mine. They seemed to welcome that I engaged with them as a colleague in learning and thinking. They also appreciated that I did not have all the answers, but that I was trying to wrestle with challenging questions and notions. The site coordinators sometimes offered feedback that they wanted me to relay to the service learning office regarding logistical arrangements that could ease their experience of accommodating students' learning.

Artifacts. In addition to participant-observations and in-depth interviews, I collected student participants' written reflections, papers, and responses to online forums. For one of the service learning courses, I also had access to the power point presentations the instructor used for lectures and students made for oral presentations. I collected handouts from service sites as well as the service learning office, including site descriptions, liability waivers, and time sheets. I captured language and pictures from the service sites' and service learning office's respective websites. With the *Mālama 'Āina* Program, I also took pictures of the various locations (if it was allowed by the site coordinator) and sometimes of people working, but was careful to avoid taking pictures where students could be easily identified. Each of these artifacts helped to shape the experience of participants and/or the narrative of the service learning interactions. The artifacts also influenced my thinking and analysis of the rest of the data.

Analysis

Interviews were transcribed verbatim. Interviews, field notes, memos, and artifacts were uploaded to Dedoose, a qualitative research software. Sifting through the data, I focused on students' descriptions of their service learning experiences and how they made sense of what was happening in the space. I also focused on what they said they learned in class and how they connected service learning experiences to course content. I explicitly examined stories and quotes that related to the overarching themes of my research questions, including white supremacy, race/racism, socio-economic class, capitalism, colonialism, in/equality, and resistance. Additionally, based on the theoretical frameworks I drew upon, I also analyzed discourse and interactions where I interpreted themes of empathy, responsibility, multiculturalism, entrepreneurialism, efficiency,

neoliberalism, governmentality, surveillance. Further, I took note of places (specifically in interviews and field notes) where participants expressed conflict and/or uncomfortability. When participants revealed tensions, I read this as signaling the existence of power dynamics that warranted further examination (e.g., this specifically happened when students described their experiences with Bright Horizons Tutoring). When I sensed tension, I also took note, trying to acknowledge if it was my outsider research presence that was the source of tension and/or if there were hints of broader conflicts being expressed in the space. Lastly, it is important to note that not all places worthy of examination included tension. Because operations of white supremacy, capitalism, and colonialism have become so hegemonic, discourses and interactions that felt quite comfortable (both for me and participants) also provided valuable information. Thus, I searched for subtle references as I interpreted interviews, field notes, memos, and artifacts through the theoretical lenses of neoliberal governmentality (Foucault, 1991; Dennis, 2009) and racial formation (Omi & Winant, 2015).

In the chapters, I provided transcribed portions of my conversations with participants to offer a sense of how they talked about service learning. I also offered some excerpts from field notes and analytic memos to give the reader a sense of how I was constructing my understanding of the dynamics that surrounded me, and that I reiteratively influenced.

Researcher Access, Subjectivity, and Interpretations

As is common in ethnographic research, there was tension regarding my presence and access to space and people. I grew up on the U.S. mainland and have only

lived in Hawai‘i for six years. I am “haole”[4] (literally translated as “foreigner,” but a term often used to refer to white people in Hawai‘i). In classroom spaces, I was old enough to be most students’ parent. Even though I attended class and took notes, accompanied students to service sites, and worked alongside them, I was not receiving academic credit for my participation nor was I considered an instructor or leader in any of the spaces, as might be the case for other non-students in these spaces. In all of these ways, I could be seen as foreign. And, because of that, it is important to realize that there may have been intentional omissions or even hidden meanings in what participants shared with me based on who I was. Those who did not feel completely comfortable with a haole researcher—and what a haole researcher would do with the data—would likely have shared different perspectives with a different researcher.

However, there were small ways in which boundaries were porous and I became familiar. For instance, I was knowledgeable about the context of higher education, and more specifically the public university system in Hawai‘i. Having previously worked as an academic advisor within the system, I knew what students and faculty were referring to when they talked about different general education courses and what the Hawai‘i Asian Pacific (HAP) focus requirement entailed. While students did not always understand my role as a researcher, I gained a little bit of trust with them through my awareness of various aspects of both “local” and Native Hawaiian culture, including my experience with some cultural land practices. I was also very familiar to the world of service learning, having been a student, teacher, and coordinator of it. This made me

[4] https://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=haole

more relatable to the faculty who were implementing service learning in their courses. We could discuss pedagogy and I could assist in troubleshooting issues that they might experience with site logistics. Additionally, I understood many of the logistics in university-community partner relationships, making it easy to approach and relate to site coordinators.

Despite the ease of relating with site coordinators, this did not always mean that I initially knew how to participate at community sites. Even though most of the times it was fairly obvious—help students with their homework or pull weeds out of the *lo'i*—when first showing up to an action with MOBILIZE!, I was a little confused. I signed in, picked up one of the red t-shirts that the union was handing out, and headed over to the picket line. On the way, a member who also had just picked up his t-shirt asked me where I worked. I told him that I wasn't a hotel worker, but that I worked with some of the students at the university. He responded, "Good," and told me that he just got off a shift at a hotel down the street. Leery of acting inappropriately, I was unsure if I should join the picket line since I wasn't a hotel worker. A quick glance of the space told me that there wasn't really anything else to do except join in. After a few rounds in the picket circle, I noticed one of the union staff members I knew standing to the side. I jumped out of the line to say hello and ask him how my body could best be used—in the picket line or elsewhere. I explained that I was asked what hotel I worked at, so I just wanted to be sure that it was ok that I was holding a sign and chanting. Cory gave an understanding chuckle, and assured me that it was fine for me to be in the line. Months later, at another action, after noticing my willingness to enthusiastically chant, one of the union members, her voice tired, handed me the bullhorn and asked me to lead the

chanting. A bit timid and nervous at first, I obliged. What I took away from this was that if people were willing to show up and picket with the union, they were fairly quickly incorporated. Advocating for better working conditions did not have the time and luxury of long deliberations over who was an ally. The other two sites worked similarly. If, in the course of research, I was there to do the work, the site coordinators seemed both welcoming and thankful.

The director of the service learning office, Dee, was the one who played the primary role in offering me access to multiple spaces and participants. More than once, various people on campus referred to Dee as the "queen" of service learning for the university. She served as the Principle Investigator of my research for the university Institutional Review Board in Hawai'i. She recommended faculty members who I could ask to observe their courses, invited me to various meetings and site visits, and introduced me to site coordinators and students. Whenever she introduced me, she would say, "Colleen is researching critical service learning and is a big help to me." I don't know if this last part was particularly true, but Dee realized that associating me with her would better legitimize me to faculty, site coordinators, and students.

There were a couple of site coordinators within Bright Horizons Tutoring and the *Mālama 'Āina* Program who did not respond to my requests for interviews. I had not met them directly, and despite me referencing Dee, their lack of response may have been a form of resistance to my presence, and more importantly, my research. This is worth noting because even as most site coordinators welcomed me into these spaces, it does not mean that all staff felt the same way.

Position and Commitments. As both a scholar and former student and practitioner of service learning, I am deeply connected to the social justice claims toward which the pedagogy aims as well as implicated in the many places the practice falls short. I hold serious reservations about the emancipatory capacity of the pedagogy, especially given the historical, political, social, and economic assumptions that undergird its practice, the conditions that contributed to its popularity, and the contexts in which it is employed. This was not always the case. I enthusiastically participated in service learning in college and worked as a service learning coordinator at a small liberal arts college nationally recognized for their service learning program. In both instances, we did little to question the power dynamics of the university-community partnerships, particularly the ways in which service learning was positioned to assimilate people of color into dominant norms of knowledge, values, and behaviors. Admittedly, I have helped sustain a pedagogy that is not only implicated in white supremacy, capitalism, and colonialism, but has also done very little to wrestle with or subvert this implication. It wasn't until reading critical feminist theory and being pushed by colleagues during the course of doctoral work that I interrogated and began to articulate the problematic power dynamics involved in the pedagogy. This dissertation seeks to reveal some of the ways that service learning entices its participants (e.g., university administrators, instructors, students, and site coordinators) while masking over the hierarchical valuations of race, class, and nation that it reinforces, and sometimes disrupts.

While my research interests interrogate how service learning interacts with the construction of ideal citizenship, I specifically chose not to conduct research in a location that mirrored most service learning research. That is, the setting was not one

comprised mostly of white, middle-class college students doing service in lower income communities of color. Even though there are intricacies within those settings, the unbalanced power dynamics are fairly easy to identify. Moreover, those scenarios have been documented. Instead, I sought to examine how power within service learning took shape in a location that was racially and ethnically complex *and* had a vibrant history of activism that challenged unjust power structures. In short, I wanted to interrogate how the dynamics of race, class, and nation within service learning and the geographical context reiteratively influenced the reification *and* disruption of white supremacy, capitalism, and colonialism.

Many of my questions stemmed from my time living in Hawai‘i prior to my doctoral work (I initially moved to Hawai‘i due to my spouse's job through the National Health Service Corps). I was constantly encountering complex power dynamics that I could not understand in the same ways that I perceived power operating in U.S. mainland contexts.[5] For instance, I knew that U.S. white people's presence was problematic in a location that colonized Indigenous people. That was easy to grasp and problematize. But I was confused by the different levels of power and tensions among various Asian groups as well as between Native Hawaiians (many of whom also have Asian ancestry) and people who identified as Asian but had no Hawaiian ancestry. And, why did the ethnically mixed students I worked with as a university academic advisor privilege their Hawaiian heritage but poke fun of their Filipino background? In my naivety, I asked myself, hadn't all of the people of color in Hawai‘i historically

[5] In retrospect, I realize that my understanding of power on the U.S. mainland was also limited.

experienced some form of oppression (e.g., Japanese Americans through plantations and internment camps and Native Hawaiians via colonization)? The framework I used to understand race and ethnicity was binary: white people and people of color; privileged and oppressed. I did not yet know about the ethnic hierarchies that plantation owners constructed among plantation workers. Nor did I realize how the political power dynamics that eventually granted Japanese Americans clout in state and federal jobs simultaneously created further dispossession of land and decision-making processes from Native Hawaiians. Not until further reading and engaging with scholars and activists in Hawai‘i did I learn about racial and ethnic formations in the state and about my "place" within these complicated formations (e.g., Fujikane, 2008; Okamura, 2014; Rohrer, 2008; Trask; 2000).

Amidst my research queries, it is important to note that I identify as a white, cisgender, straight, able-bodied, middle-class woman who selected to conduct field research in Hawai‘i. My skin color and physical habitus mirror white women missionaries in a colonized land. Put simply, my presence in the islands and specifically within the research space was problematic, regardless of the fact that my personal politics aim to disrupt colonial logics of white supremacy and capitalism. Academic research, especially conducted by white people in Indigenous communities, is laden with all sorts of problems. Questionable motives, knowledge extraction, exoticization fetishes, white savior complexes, professional advancement, and more are often entangled in such research projects (Minh-ha, 1989; Smith, 2012). Scholars and people wishing to "help" have long histories of deepening injustices as opposed to alleviating them. This dynamic is a major theme within the present study, so it is also a question

with which I have wrestled and continue to do so on a daily basis. As researcher and activist, I strive for solidarity with people who have historically been on the social margins of dominant society. However, my efforts are both imperfect and must be done with great care. Trask (2000) challenges non-Hawaiians who aim for solidarity with Native Hawaiians to follow the lead of Native Hawaiians rather than overtake the space and leadership of activist groups. This message has important implications for how I show up in spaces; I attempt humility at every turn.

However, striving for humility does not mean that I always succeed at it. My outsiderness inevitably, whether consciously or subconsciously, shaped how participants viewed me, what they shared with me, and how they acted towards me. Likewise, my position, including my hesitancy about being a white researcher from the U.S. continent, influenced how I interacted with students, faculty, and site coordinators, especially in the beginning of field work. Chad, one of the instructors who participated in the study and had been consistently involved in activist movements, including efforts for Native Hawaiian sovereignty, was generous enough to name my awkwardness and pushed me to do better. Below is an excerpt from an exchange I had with Chad after he asked me about how my research was coming along. The interaction, and my subsequent field note about it, captured some of my discomfort about physically representing a colonizer doing research in Indigenous spaces and asking students to participate in it.

Chad offered that he would try to think of students who might be good for me to approach to interview. He said, "Because they should be talking with you." I shared that I just needed to be better about asking students. Chad asked, "How do you go about approaching them?" I replied, kind of fumbling through my words that I'm wondering if

they would be interested in sitting down and talking with me about their experiences in class and at the service site. Chad laughed and said, "I feel like you're trying to sell me something." I replied with a squint on my face, "I knowwww." I shared that I feel like that's what I'm doing, which I don't like and so then my uncomfortableness about what I'm doing gets projected onto them and they're not interested. He said, "There's too much distance with 'I'm wondering if you would like to.' You're giving them too much room to not be interested." Chad suggested that I just be more direct, like, "Hey," his voice went into the sing-song intonation of pidgin, "I'm really interested in what you're thinking about and experiencing with service-learning. Can we sit down and talk about it sometime?" {I thought "YES, this is exactly what I needed to hear!"}[6] *I nodded and said, "Thank you. I really appreciate you pointing that out. I think I knew somehow that that's what I needed to do, but for some reason, I couldn't pull it out." Kyle replied, "That's what they teach us in organizing. You just have to go for the ask." He said, "Think of a con man. They pull you right in." I shared again, "I really appreciate you calling that out. That's helpful."* (Field note Nov. 17, 2017)

Upon further reflection, a "con man" is how I sometimes felt. Here I was, a haole from the U.S. mainland conducting research in Indigenous spaces that had been colonized by the U.S. What was I thinking? In my graduate training I engaged with a number of readings that cautioned about the dangers of such dynamics and warned about trusting outside researchers due to the historical abuse and misrepresentation of

[6] The use of brackets like { and } illustrates how I attempted to distinguish my particular thoughts in analytic memos from the concrete acts and words. Granted, both are still shaped by my perceptions and recounting. With a poststructural perspective, I doubt the two (thoughts and representations of actions) could ever be completely separated.

Indigenous peoples (e.g., Minh-ha, 1989; Smith, 2012; Tuck & Yang, 2012). Yet, (perhaps for good and for ill), this was the route I chose. Given the history I represent and the privileges I have been afforded due to white supremacy and colonization, I have sometimes wondered if I should even trust myself. I have made (and continue to make) many mistakes. I have numerous blind spots. I have asked myself if my intentions are good enough, my thoughts kind enough, and my gestures respectful enough. Asking these questions does not resolve the tensions of my positionality within this research project. There are no easy or suitable answers. And yet, if I wanted to take seriously my personal commitment to better understanding education for social justice as well as relationships with people where I was located, I needed to work through my own doubts and fears of never being enough and at least make a valid attempt at trying. Thus, I act and write about issues I think are important for how society is structured, how various people experience the ramifications of those structures, and how we can collectively join together to envision and enact differently.[7]

While I wish to be responsible in regards to my positionality, I also find it important to recognize the limits of identity. People's ascribed identities do not tell the entirety of their experience, their positions, nor their possible contributions to social change. In simple terms, people of color, who also have political power, can enact policies that have harmful ramifications for socially marginalized people, just as those with white privilege can fight against such policies. However, the dynamics are not

[7] Despite my desires to be guided by strong ethics and respectful relationships in my research and actions, whether I succeeded at this is something that only my participants and those who read my work can rightly judge.

typically as straightforward as that. Social identities and the operation of power tend to be entangled in all sorts of intersecting ways that make determining harmful power dynamics more obvious in retrospect than in the moments they occur. Because of this, people (white women in particular) tend to avoid confronting people of color who abuse power, thereby continuing to disenfranchise "other" people on the social margins. I consistently and messily navigate these dynamics.

Some may ask why I try for solidarity and why I work to disrupt current societal structures when I clearly benefit from them. To me, that question is short-sighted. A better question is how can I/we not? The structure of society and the power relations that operate within it are extremely problematic. Many people experience extreme hardship and die based on what they look like, where they were born, and how their bodies are treated by as well as are forced to engage with social institutions such as schools, the corrections system, housing, employment, health care, and much more. Even when the hardship is not extreme, the systematic ways in which the elite and our institutions create hierarchies have a way of maintaining and accumulating advantages for some and continually oppressing most. So yes, at a basic level, I find it imperative to join with people who have a long history of resisting and revolting against unjust powers.

And, I am angry—angry at how society is stratified in such unequal ways, but also that it has taken me until mid-life to better understand the imbalanced power dynamics of race, class, and nation that were embedded into the foundational logics and operations of social systems—including the school system that prepared me, and many of my peers, for participation in democracy with the (perhaps subconscious?) intent of domination. I wish that my teachers and schools would have exposed me to readings

from critical theorists early on but also that I would have sought out those readings and theorists long before my fourth decade of life. I mention the role of schooling because I believe that my educational experiences, and my interactions with them, typify the construction of the ideal citizen that I critique in this study. Part of what I seek to understand is how this construction happens and what we can do to envision and build differently.

Interpretations. In addition to my identity, it is also critical to note how my interpretive lens has been shaped. While I share anti-colonial political commitments with Native Hawaiians, our epistemological and ontological orientations may vary. Of course, Native Hawaiian culture is not homogenous, but there are *mo'olelo* (stories) that connect Hawaiians to the specific land and waters of the island chain. This worldview influences some of my participants' beliefs and behaviors in ways that are likely different from my orientation to the world. As an example, one creation story is of Hāloa-naka, a stillborn child of Mother Earth (Papa) and Father Sky (Wākea). The parents buried the child, and as they grieved, their tears, watered the site. A *kalo* plant sprung from the spot. Hāloa-naka, in the form of *kalo*, became the elder brother of Papa and Wākea's next child, and of the entire Hawaiian people (Kame'eleihiwa, 1992). This *mo'olelo* is often repeated at *Mālama 'Āina* sites where participants work in the *lo'i kalo*. Citing the importance of the reciprocal relationships between people, land, and plants, one land steward explained that when *kalo* ceases to exist, so will Native Hawaiians. Hawaiians must care for the *kalo* because it is their elder brother, but also because *kalo* will ensure the continued existence of its people. This is one of many *mo'olelo* from which Native Hawaiians gather wisdom and insight.

I respect the story of Hāloa-naka and what it offers for understanding reciprocal relations between land and people, but the *mo'olelo* does not particularly guide how I view or understand the world. Instead, my perspectives and how I interpret data are informed and limited by my own upbringing and have been nuanced by my academic training, both of which have been through a Euro-American worldview. To explain what this means for me in a bit more detail, I grew up in a family and a community that laid out the world in the binary fashion of right and wrong, good and bad. My graduate studies, first in world religions and later in sociology and education, introduced me to various ways of thinking and being that were more complex and contradictory. I now believe that as individuals (and as larger groups of people), we often hold competing perspectives within ourselves. As we struggle to make sense of and act in the world, we have a tendency of advancing one thing while damaging another—even when that other thing should not be impaired. And, we are often inconsistent. We are constantly weighing possibilities and making in-the-moment judgments that are messy and imperfect. My point is that I question how definitions of good and bad came to be and work to understand the complexities that lie within. Sometimes I remain committed to what on the surface seem like incommensurable positions. Other times, I take a clearer stance on what I believe to be "right" because I think it is better than the alternatives. Realizing that my position is always filled with it its own contradictions and problems, I remain open to modifications, yet am still guided by my own understanding of social justice.

So to come back to the *mo'olelo* of Hāloa-naka, I must admit that as a person who lived the first eighteen years of life in the same place, but then moved around every

three to five years for the next three decades, I do not have a strong attachment to a precise place or a belief that my ancestors and their descendants belong to a specific land. While I do not deny that Native Hawaiians' beliefs about creation deeply wed them to a particular place, our interpretations of and orientations to nation, belonging, and migration may vary.

Relatedly, readers will notice that in this dissertation, I do not draw heavily on Native Hawaiian scholarship for my theoretical or interpretive frameworks. A major reason for this is because that is not the tradition in which I was educated. Thus, to rely significantly on Hawaiian scholarship in my research without serious study would be disingenuous. My hope is to speak to the broad audience of U.S. higher education and service learning, both of which, like Hawai'i, but in different ways, have been influenced by histories and practices of white supremacy, capitalism, and colonialism. I see the overarching themes of neoliberalism and racial formation that I employ as applicable to Hawai'i as well the continental U.S.

Despite descriptions of researcher positionality reading like awkward confessional tales, I name my political and social positions as well as my onto-epistemological orientations because they influence and limit how I think and see the world. As I write, I routinely battle hegemonic notions I have learned, especially those of white saviorism (Cole, 2012) and liberal feminism (Gerson, 2002). My hope is that these are not articulated on paper because that would serve to further reinforce ideas that need dismantling. However, due to the heavy influence of unjust structures in U.S. society, these notions are bound to lurk in the backdrop. I ask people to critically engage with my work. While my intention through this study was to interrogate the ways in

which service learning is utilized to teach and learn about social in/justice as well as disrupt discourses, logics, values, and practices that maintain harmful hierarchies, I also realize that intentions are socially constructed through dominant discourses and can reify the exact ideologies that we try to unhinge. Obviously, there are numerous ways that service learning within this study could be understood. I encourage readers to think through alternative ways of understanding the dynamics presented so as to generate dialogue that will deepen critical analysis of service learning, interrupt the ways that unjust power dynamics within the pedagogy operate, as well as envision different pedagogical and action-oriented strategies for greater social justice.

Significance

Most service learning scholarship is based on data that involves: 1) conceptual criticism 2) surveys and interviews wherein students self-report their attitudes, beliefs, and actions, and/or 3) students' reflections and classroom discussions as analyzed by the instructor of the service learning course. What the field lacks are critical ethnographic studies where a researcher has been a participant-observer in service learning classes and at community partner sites. This methodology allows for the researcher to notice the nuances of curriculum, discussions, and community work; build relationships with students that are not associated with a grade for the class; and work alongside students at their community sites, allowing for informal conversations in a low-stakes environment. The last piece is something that many faculty members do not take the time to do with their students.

In addition to utilizing different data sources and methods, this study adds to the scholarship by illustrating how service learning is connected to the historical, social, and

economic purposes of education. Relatedly, it strengthens the theoretical and practical understandings of how the seemingly contradictory purposes of democracy and domination permeate civic engagements efforts.

CHAPTER FOUR

Advancing Neoliberal Racial Projects: Bright Horizons Tutoring

> *They may come from a home or they come from a milieu where there are no young people who have goals, have objectives in life [and] are actually pursuing those objectives…who have real optimism about the future and maybe some real plans. There may be nobody they see at all in the adult world who is doing that until you have these people who are not that much older than they are who are…going to school and they are studying.* – Daniel, Instructor

Bright Horizons Tutoring Overview

Bright Horizons Tutoring was an after-school program for elementary and middle school students. Technically, high school students could also participate, but they tended not to. Service learners from the university assisted with Bright Horizons Tutoring in three main locations: Valley Elementary School, Valley Middle School, and Valley Learning Center. Each of the sites within Bright Horizons Tutoring were set back in a lush, green valley. A sizeable portion of the people living in the valley identified as Pacific Islander and resided within the neighborhood's subsidized housing units. Many of the two-story buildings were renovated a decade ago; a few still sat in disrepair with peeling paint and windows detached from their intended frame. The Valley Learning Center, which was a part of the renovated buildings, was located on the second floor. Leading up to the space was a wide, stairwell with red-painted stairs. The beige walls had open-air windows in the cinderblocks, allowing the breezes of the valley to sweep through the stairwell. This created natural air conditioning.

At the top of the stairs was the entrance to Valley Learning Center, a bright, open space with high ceilings and windows all along both sides of the rectangular building. Each wall was glossed with a different color: lime green, lavender, sunshine yellow, and turquoise. The space was so large that about 30 ceiling fans hung down and swirled the air around the open room. The design of Valley Learning Center was much warmer and inviting than the institutional look on the outside of the building. Everything in the space looked new and tidy—from the corner with kitchen appliances to the computer lab, AV equipment, wooden tables and chairs for homework, and plush furniture in the reading room. The space was much nicer than most buildings on the university's campus. There were signs on the walls similar to those found on elementary school bulletin boards. The signs were filled with messages about character traits of responsibility, respect, citizenship, and fairness. One bright pink banner with white letters read, "Character is how you live life when no one is looking."

Bright Horizons Tutoring was like most tutoring and after-school programs with a mix of homework help and other creative and physical activities. In order for college students to do their service learning within Bright Horizons Tutoring, they attended either a group or individual orientation with one of the site coordinators. At the orientation, they received a tour of the site and completed paperwork that included a sheet with their contact information, days and hours they could tutor, a place to write down their skills and interests in case they wanted to facilitate an activity with the younger students, and a safety waiver. The staff provided an overview of the program (e.g., homework first, activities second) and some basic rules.

One of the reasons the Valley neighborhood had been identified for Bright Horizons Tutoring was because of the elementary and middle schools' history of lower performance on standardized tests than other public schools in the district (Hawaii DOE, 2018). A factor contributing to the test scores was the high percentage English learners; the schools only offered instruction in English. Another reason this area was targeted for educational support was because it was geographically close to the university. The hope was that as the college students offered tutoring for the children, this would not only assist younger students with their daily homework, but potentially their overall academic trajectory.

As the college students engaged with Bright Horizons Tutoring, they received multiple messages about the neighborhood and the young students with whom they worked. The rhetoric was produced by site coordinators and instructors, but also existed within the very set up of the program. Namely, middle-class college students from outside the neighborhood came to tutor in an educational program that was comprised of mostly low-income, immigrant students of color. The dynamics already echoed missionary efforts to teach people the knowledge and behaviors valued by dominant society. Added to these reverberations were interactions and discourses that influenced the construction and boundaries of racialized and ideal citizens. As Omi and Winant (2015) point out, social institutions frame race at the macro level while individuals' interactions reiteratively reinforce race at the micro level. The micro-level rhetoric and actions highlight how Bright Horizons Tutoring operated as a particular racial project. Specifically, the discourses and practices played into 1) differentiating bodies, 2) demarcating acceptable knowledge, 3) classifying college as good, and 4) building

empathy for "others." For the most part, college students and the younger students alike seemed to internalize the messages provided to them. However, in some instances, they resisted the dominant ideas and purported their own alternative understandings of how to be a (racialized, class-ified, and nationalized) member of society. I end the chapter with an analysis of how the site supported hegemonic notions of neoliberal ideal citizenship as well as an opening for a racial project of resistance.

Differentiating Bodies

The orientation to the Bright Horizons Tutoring program was the first place that service learners were differentiated from the neighborhood where they were volunteering as well as the children with whom they worked. Specifically, college students heard messages from authority figures—site coordinators and instructors—about the area and what they should expect. For instance, Heather, a student who had recently transferred from a college on the continental U.S., shared that during the orientation at Valley Elementary School, the site coordinator, "told me not to leave anything in my car ever. She said that almost every single time that they've had people leave stuff in their car, it's been taken, off the streets." Heather followed with, "It's obviously a dangerous neighborhood." These instructions from an official representative of the school and the service learning program signaled to Heather that she needed to be cautious about the items she left in her car, otherwise, they could be taken. The message that Heather took away from the site coordinator was that the neighborhood was "dangerous."

Service learners also were told during the orientation at Valley Elementary School that they were "not allowed to touch any of the kids. Even if they come up to you, you kind of have to give them a distraction or like physically…push them away sort of."

Heather continued, noting that they were not to show affection or approval through touch but rather through words. While she heeded the instructions given, this reaction was antithetical to her thought process. She reasoned, "I don't think that the best way to get a message across that you're someone safe and someone that [the kids] could trust is also a message that you can send and say that I can't show affection to you and I can't give you a hug when I see you." In addition to rules about touch, Heather shared that service learners were directed to "never comment on [the students'] appearance." She explained:

> Some kids would show up in the same outfit every single day and you're not allowed to comment on whether or not their stuff is clean, torn, what they look like at all. And you're not to make assumptions about what their life is at home and ask them questions like, "Do you eat breakfast?" Or "Do you brush your teeth?" [The site coordinator] said to prompt questions like, "What did you eat for breakfast?" Or "What time this morning did you brush your teeth?"…I guess you just don't want to make an assumption that they didn't brush their teeth and put a child in a position where they feel like they have to defend themselves.

The messages Heather was provided from the site coordinator about the elementary students' clothing, teeth, and eating habits distinguished her own body and experiences as separate from—and differently valued than—the children with whom she interacted. Despite service learners being given information about the young children's material realities, there was no complex explanation as to why these realities existed for this particular neighborhood. Rather, the information stopped with how they were supposed to—and not supposed to—interact with the students.

Sharing more about her interactions with the elementary students, Heather observed, “From the way the kids act and interact with each other and their teachers, you would never guess they were homeless or you know, didn't eat lunch, breakfast or dinner yesterday kind of thing.” What is interesting about this comment is that while Heather had some information about the children’s lives outside of school—based on demographic and observational data as well as messages from the site coordinator—she then used the data to expound upon the conditions. Specifically, the material symbols of poverty (that of having tattered clothing or not having a meal) now included homelessness, even though the students were not homeless; they lived in subsidized housing. With such stark descriptions of material inequalities, Heather shared that at the end of the day, she thought about “what [the children] are going home to.” She disclosed:

> I notice in their appearance a little bit that their families might not be wealthy. But their attitudes don’t, I can't see it at all. They're just really so excited. They're just so happy to be there. They were learning how to type on the computer and it was like the craziest excitement I've ever seen in my life. And I was like, “What is going on?” And it's just …they don't know any different and it's just like they're happy either way. And so that's kind of what I think about all the time.…I don't know how to explain it. Like they don't know that where they're coming from isn't necessarily the best or safest environment that a kid can be in. But they're making the most of it every day and it's really awesome.

Heather juxtaposed the students’ positive and lively character at school with thoughts about their neighborhood and their home lives. The material realities of the

children conjured emotional and moral dimensions within Heather's imagination. Specifically, she figured that their lack of wealth would have a particular impact on their attitudes, despite acknowledging not being able to "see" the students outside of school and not knowing "what their home life is like." For Heather, the students' happiness and excitement were at odds with what economically impoverished people's attitudes should or would be. She saw the children "making the most of it every day." Heather also guessed that the children were happy at school because it was "probably the best part of their day." She continued with her rationale:

> It's where they for sure get food in the afternoon. So they get fed, they get to see all their friends, they get to play on computers. Maybe they don't have computers at home.….So I think school is not only like a fun place to be for them, but it's a safe place where they know everyone's going to be gentle and kind all day. So they're excited to be there and just stay. And maybe their home is the exact opposite.

Heather followed the discursive frame that was presented to her from the site coordinator who worked at the school and oriented her to the environment. The words often used to describe the lives of the children outside of school were encoded with prevalent stereotypes about race, class, and immigration. Mirroring the example provided to her, Heather circulated messages she received about the younger students' material conditions at home and applied it to the (perceived) emotional realities of their families. In short, the students' positive attitude at school was somehow twisted to mean that their home environment was the opposite. As such, both Heather and the younger students were discursively shaped by the intersecting categories of race, class, and nation.

Specifically, the elementary school as well as its instructors and tutors, served as representations of the state, providing the appropriate (U.S., white, middle-class) material and emotional norms and resources that students' families were thought not to have.

Jacque, a local student who studied psychology and volunteered at Valley Learning Center, was also given particular messages about the area and the people with whom she would be interacting. Though she was not given the same guidelines for touch and conversation that Heather received at Valley Elementary School, Jacque was told by her instructor at the beginning of her service learning project that Valley Learning Center was in an "unfortunate environment." While Jacque said that she did not know exactly what the instructor meant by this, she compared what she knew about the young children with her experiences volunteering with local teens in a religious youth group. She described the teens as coming from "supportive families" and juxtaposed that with the children at Valley Learning Center, assuming that the children "probably" came from a "less fortunate" environment. She reflected:

> I don't know if they have like less affection when they go home. Less attention, less help with school. Maybe that's why they go to this group to get help for homework because they don't get help at home.…But I don't know the circumstance. I mean, there could be kids who get abused at home or bossed around….So I don't know if these kids when they go home, do they have a lot of chores? Do they help around the house? Do they have to do all this stuff that's less attention towards themselves in their school or like if they're even given opportunities to be in sports, like I don't know if they have less money or less social support. From what [the instructor] told me in the beginning, she just told

> me…it's a[n]…unfortunate environment. Maybe they don't get as many opportunities regarding money.…[The instructor] made it look like…they're more into a stage where problems do occur at home or at their school. I've only heard about fighting at school or what these kids get into so I don't know too much to really understand what she meant by they have less, but I can kind of see it in the neighborhood, which is why I think that the service learning is so great for the kids. I honestly don't know, some of them could have like, you know, social support and they have food for snacks or toys.…So I mean they may be fine, they may be fortunate, I honestly don't know.

Jacque referenced being able to see material poverty within the neighborhood. Beyond that and the instructor's comment about the environment being "unfortunate," she did not have much information. As to her own experiences with the children, she noted that they were "so lively and they really look forward to seeing you and your attention." Yet their energy and excitement made her "wonder like how is it when they go home. Because I do know some, probably have family issues or they mention at school that they get into…fighting." Jacque contrasted the "inspirational" environment of Valley Learning Center to that of school and home in a way that she "c[ould]n't imagine what else they go through." Yet, she did imagine. She imagined all kinds of troubling factors in the students' home lives—from abuse to not having opportunities to play sports. Since neither the instructor nor the site coordinators offered a fuller context or a complex description of why these particular people, in this particular neighborhood were experiencing systemic inequalities, Jacque kept guessing at what it was that made the environment so unfortunate.

Using logic that the home environment must be deficient was a way that Jacque could make sense of why she was needed to volunteer at Valley Learning Center in the first place. With the religious youth group where she also volunteered, Jacque shared the common affiliation of a religious community. But with Valley Learning Center, there was no explicit connection other than the fact that the university's service learning office had a partnership with the site. If the partnership existed, then there must be a "need" for volunteers outside of the Valley community. Jacque aptly followed the framework she was given. She could understand herself as helping Valley Learning Center offer the academic and emotional support that the students' families must not be able to provide. She shared that at Valley Learning Center, the children were "getting the privilege to be with friends and do homework" and she wanted to make sure that they took advantage of the opportunity. She stated, "I don't know the issues they have at home. I hope if they don't have interactions at home, they're at least getting [them] at the after-school program."

Both Jacque and Heather operated within the missionary framework provided to them as they came from outside the neighborhood to assist in education efforts for low-income immigrant children of color. The messages they received about the environment and the students distinguished their own bodies from those of the children in Bright Horizons Tutoring, and in the process racialized, class-ified, and nationalized their lives as separate. Typically, these perceptions could be challenged in the service learning classroom by the instructor or classmates. However, both Jacque and Heather were in the Experiential Work service learning class that operated similar to an internship. They did not have regular class meetings with an instructor. And, in the minimal interaction they

did have, the instructor did not offer complex understandings of the social and political conditions of the Valley neighborhood or the educational opportunities there. Nor were any readings provided that could help them think more critically about the social structures that shaped the lives of the students and their families. Jacque and Heather used the information they had to make sense of the material conditions they witnessed. Unfortunately, this resulted in imagining worst case scenarios about the students' family lives. The material circumstances of the neighborhood with a majority of low-income immigrants of color were linked to race, class, and nation. In the minds of the service learners, these material realities were contorted into emotional conditions that relied on stereotypes (e.g., people not appropriately caring for their children). This racial project inadvertently reinforced the idea of outside helpers coming in to assist economically impoverished children of color because the children's families lacked attention, affection, and the skills to assist them with homework. At the end of the semester meeting, the instructor offered, "Thank you for all the work you're doing in the community. It takes guts to go out there and do this kind of thing." The implicit messages within the project helped to shape Heather and Jacque as ideal citizens to immolate and the young children as needing rescue from their home environments.

Emily, a biology major who volunteered at Valley Learning Center, also noted the differences in material resources of the Valley neighborhood compared to other communities. She described the Valley neighborhood as being "disadvantaged" and that "disadvantaged communities are seen as like, not bad, but like more criminal," which then influenced the amount of "funding [that goes] towards those types of communities." Emily was connecting the perceptions about various people and spaces to the resources

that flowed their way. She also noted how the younger students were controlled in school. They told her that their teacher would yell at them if they spoke their primary language in class rather than reserve it for recess. Thus, this racial project was formulated not just through material conditions of poverty but also through the language people spoke. Communication in English was another method the school used to reinforce U.S., white norms.

Hi‘ipoi, a senior who tutored at Valley Elementary School, was the only service learner who started to push back against the rhetoric that constructed the younger students as deficient and the neighborhood as dangerous. She shared:

> During my training [the site coordinator said], “Oh, don't park at this area because stuff gets, like cars get broken into all the time.” And I still parked there. And nothing really got broken into. Or just like, “Oh, these kids, they're rowdy or they don't listen.” …That was interesting, like already projecting kind of a negative image of the students, which I was kinda like, you shouldn't be doing that.

Hi‘ipoi’s reflection on what the site coordinator said exposed and challenged the coded messages about the area and the elementary students. Instructions about where to park, images of cars being broken into, and depictions of rowdy students invoked discourses of danger, crime, and chaos. This rhetoric painted what Hi‘ipoi called a “negative image” of the neighborhood and the students—an opposite image of ideal citizenry. Ironically, while the college students were warned about the safety of the neighborhood, the elementary and middle school students were able to walk freely around the neighborhood by themselves, back and forth between home, Valley Learning

Center, and school, all which were about a half-mile apart. Differences in treatment and protection highlighted the unspoken assumptions that the service learners and the younger students occupied different locations on the trajectory to the racialized, class-ified, and nationalized ideal citizen. Because service learners went to college and were assisting younger students with their homework, they were positioned as closer to the ideal (and possibly in greater need of protection).

Hi‘ipoi also challenged this ideal through her clothes and her body. She shared that the first time she went to Valley Elementary School to tutor,

> I had worn like, a like a spaghetti strap with a shawl or something and the Aunty told me to wear less revealing clothes or something like that. But it literally, like I was covered.…I was like, “Umm, okay, like what am I supposed to wear? I'm covering myself. I can't help it if I have breasts.” You know what I mean?…A couple times when I wore shorts, the students were intrigued on what the history was behind my tattoos because I have the Hawaiian monarchy on me and the moon phases.…And I think the students really like that I was a brown person coming in to tutor them.

Despite Bright Horizons Tutoring distinguishing the service learners’ bodies and behaviors from those of the younger students and their families, Hi‘ipoi’s presence offered small disruptions to the construction of the ideal citizen. While the service learning project wished to socialize the younger students into the more desired bodies and behaviors of the college students, Hi‘ipoi’s brown body, covered with inked images that valued Polynesian culture, physically interjected a way of operating in the world that did not perfectly reflect the expectations and values of the white-normed, U.S. elementary

school. Additionally, the way Hi‘ipoi thought about the younger students and the neighborhood unsettled the deficit-based message the site coordinator gave her. Hi‘ipoi’s perspective offers an example of how the power dynamics of micro interactions did not always follow that of hegemonic ideas. Rather, students could question and re-articulate the representations provided. It is important to note, however, that Hi‘ipoi was very well-versed in Native Hawaiian sovereignty efforts and was an outspoken advocate of them. As a college senior who had taken multiple Hawaiian Studies and Ethnic Studies courses, she may have had more exposure than her peers to critical discourses that could challenge dominant notions about a low-income immigrant neighborhood.

Demarcating Acceptable Knowledge

The Aunties who staffed Valley Learning Center greeted students with smiles, playful teasing, and gentle concern. If a situation called for it though, they could quickly turn to sternness. Having lived in the community for over a dozen years, the Aunties were familiar with the children’s family members and vice versa. The children were aware of this familiarity and thus did not test the limits too much because they knew they would have to face the Aunties in the neighborhood as well as the Valley Learning Center. Nonetheless, the children tried boundaries when it came to homework. During the service learners’ orientation, one of the Aunties cautioned, “Sometimes the kids are telling the truth, but sometimes they’re lying.” If the students said they did not have any homework, it had “only a 50/50 chance of being correct.” Because of this, service learners were given permission to confront the children about whether they still had homework. At the same time, the Aunties were mindful of not wanting to put the college students in an

uncomfortable position, so they said that if the service learners did not want to question the students, they could ask one of the Aunties to do so.

Service learners were told that if they noticed any of the students struggling with their homework to let one of the Aunties know. The staff mentioned that many of the children did not receive academic support at home, and so the Valley Learning Center staff sometimes communicated with the teachers at the school about students. An Aunty gave an example of a child who just came from "back home" (an island in Micronesia). Even though the student was old enough to be in third grade, the school placed him in first grade due to his limited English language abilities. Yet, staff at Valley Learning Center found that the student was still unable to do his reading comprehension and math homework. He did not know how to write numbers, let alone read directions. The staff recommended to the school that they send him back to kindergarten or do something so that he could learn how to read and write "from scratch." Knowing that the school only offered instruction in English as opposed to the boy's primary language, the Aunties were concerned that he would fall even further behind the academic standards set by the school.

While some of the children were proficient at their grade level for English instruction in reading and math (the two main subjects ever discussed), some were not. There was little talk about faculty or service learners becoming more familiar with the cultural knowledge the young students brought to the educational environment. Instead, the process was about getting them to learn the standards constructed by the school, which were aligned with what students would need to continue to be academically successful in the P-20 pipeline. These standards, and the language in which they were

instructed, was a significant way in which valued knowledge was connected with white, middle-class, U.S. norms. Thus, expectations of language and cultural knowledge systematically worked to reinforce the formation of race, class, and nation.

Niki, a first-year, first-semester psychology major from the U.S. mainland, disclosed how she tried helping a student who was not reading at the same level as his peers. Even though the student was engaged and wanted to learn, he "just didn't know anything." Niki explained:

> I just had to tell him to sound it out because that's how I learned when I was a kid. Just sounding out each letter and just reading that word. But the thing is that I don't think they understood when I said, "Sound out each letter." … I was kind of stuck at one point cause I was like, I don't know what else to do because if they can't sound out the words then…I don't want to go all the way back to like, "Oh this is an A, B." You know? "C." And all the sounds of it because like that's just too much. It's just such a simple homework. I don't want to go into it.

Niki admitted that she was "stuck" in knowing how to assist the primary school student with reading. Since sounding out letters, the way that she learned to read, did not make sense to the students, Niki shared that she eventually enlisted other primary students to help the student. Niki creatively used the power and knowledge of peers to aid the student. Yet what stood out to her was that the student was struggling and she did not know how to best assist him.

Niki wondered in a conversation with me, "How would you deal with kids who just don't want to do anything or how would you teach them certain things?" She was looking for guidance and mentioned that she even asked her roommate and boyfriend

what they would do in the situation. Those two people in her life did not seem to have any more experience with younger children than she did. Not only did Niki not have any prior training, she also did not have anyone who made themselves available to assist her when she got "stuck" in knowing what to do. This example exposed a limit of constructing college students as the ones with desired knowledge. What happens when they do not have the intellectual resources required to be helpful? Of course, powerful learning can come from college students having to figure things out on their own through trial and error, but there are young children whose educational well-being is impacted in this exercise of experiential learning. The elementary and middle school students were already enrolled in schools that were underresourced. For instance, the Valley schools did not offer dual-lingual or multilingual instruction and the public school teachers were some of the lowest paid in the nation when factoring in cost of living (Turner, 2018). Additionally, for the purposes of participating in service learning, it did not matter whether tutors for the students had any experience in quality or culturally relevant instruction.

Scott, a psychology major who grew up in a suburban neighborhood on island, tutored at Valley Middle School. He also shared how many students were learning English as a second language. One of the students he was assigned to work with had a hard time with reading. Scott described his interaction with this student.

> He wasn't really receptive of me….I think it was too hard or…maybe he felt like he wasn't smart enough…I think he might have felt dumb or something. I think the one thing that really kinda like made him not open with me is this one time he didn't have any homework. He didn't have any reading to do. He usually just reads.

> And he reads like second grade books.…So what I do usually when I'm with him is I'll read the second grade books too. And then I'll make a little quiz for him and then I'll quiz him. And that's how I know he can't really read that well because when I quiz him, he gets maybe 50% right. And they're Clifford the Big Red Dog kind of books.…I think the thing that closed him off was he didn't have any homework to do, any essays. So then I was just sitting with him and then the group leaders that just walk around, they're like, "[Jamie], you gotta do something. Why don't you write an essay?" So then they made him write an essay and I was trying to help him. But, his English skills aren't that good, right? So I had to sound out every single word for him.…I don't know if he was just faking it actually. He might have been faking it. But even if he was, I feel like that's when, that's when he kind of like, I don't know, closed off….I think it's just too much work for him.…He didn't even finish the essay I don't think. I don't know why that closed him off. I think it's just too hard.

Like Niki, Scott did not have any training for tutoring or teaching strategies, neither from the site nor the university. Scott disclosed that the only experience he had with tutoring prior to this was assisting his friends with math homework. Thus, when it came time to help the middle school student write an essay, the only thing Scott knew to do was sound out words for him. Since the tutors were not in the classroom when curriculum was covered, nor did they have any interactions with the teachers to ask them questions, they were left to their own devices in assisting the students. This is a typical dynamic of after-school programs. It is assumed that the

older students have learned the content and thus have the knowledge and capability to teach it to younger students.

Troubling this dynamic is not to deny the possibility of teaching material once it is learned. Nor is it to take away the importance of learning to teach. It is often in teaching that people become more knowledgeable about the content themselves. However, what remains problematic is the idea that primary and secondary students in schools that are already underresourced and that have been deemed low-performing are supplied assistance from untrained tutors rather than given supplemental instruction from qualified teachers. Yes, the tutors are in college, but this does not mean that they know how to support younger students' learning.

In fact, Scott disclosed that when the students did not have any homework, "Sometimes we'd be just sitting around because there's nothing to do. And you know, I guess [the site supervisor] expected us to be doing work since we're volunteering…But sometimes there's just nothing for us to do." It was in these moments of nothing to do that the extra essay assignment, like the one given to Jamie, was created. Rather than having a learning activity that was engaging or exciting, the student was tasked with what seemed like more homework. The structure of the program did not allow for much creativity or varying ways to engage the youth. This was one of the ways that the Bright Horizons Tutoring maintained a differentiation of resources, bodies, and knowledge—it was assumed acceptable for immigrant students of color from a low-income neighborhood to have untrained university tutors and disengaged learning. This dynamic would not be admissible in elite or well-funded public schools.

Comparing his experience of middle school to those of the students he tutored, Scott said that the middle school he attended had "high public school standards" and that his teachers used "more creative assignments" to teach than those used at Valley Middle School. For instance, to teach physiology of the human body, his middle school teachers had students making a chimera out of clay. But at Valley Middle School, students were simply expected to memorize body parts and their functions. Scott explained two factors that likely contributed to this variation: 1) the amount of time teachers put into planning; and 2) "the social-economic status of the children." Scott reasoned that since there was a "gang shooting before…that pretense makes it so the classes and the curriculum is a lot more stricter. Whereas in [the suburb] there's no crime, you don't have to worry too much." Scott took the information about the strict dress code (service learners were not allowed to wear red because it was considered a gang color) and carried it over to the teachers' pedagogy. He reasoned that the teachers were not afforded the possibility of creativity in teaching and learning because they were concerned about what could happen (e.g., gang activity or a gun in school). He thought they might need to spend more time on monitoring and regulating behavior rather than teaching creatively.

Despite college students and younger students being provided a script that they were to follow (e.g., college students as an older, knowledgeable helper and younger student as academically inept), the college students' and younger students' behavior did not always adhere to it. Scott shared a story wherein this narrative was disrupted and exposed some palpable and unsavory power dynamics between the college tutors and the middle school students.

> When I was tutoring this group of kids and there's one of them that really needed help, but the other ones are kind of doing alright by themselves. And they would ask me for questions occasionally. But then one of the other ones he just kept on trying to distract me. He was like, "Is this right? Is this right?" Even though he didn't even do some of the work, some of it was blank and he just pointed to it, "Is this right?" And he would just say numbers and try to mess up my count. But, it didn't work.…I'm a pretty patient person so…I didn't really think too much of it....And then when he actually did need help I would help him and stuff. But I would mostly be helping that one person that really need[ed] help. And then later…he asked me, "Are you guys even necessary?" And I was like, that kind of triggered me. I was just like, I gave him like a death glare and then I told him, "I guess we're not necessary but we're just trying to help."…That's not the tone I used. I used a lot meaner tone. And I gave him a death glare and then he kinda like, I dunno. I felt bad afterwards because he kind of went silent and he seemed really, you know, like when you scold your dog kind of.

The younger student who asked Scott if the tutors were "even necessary" pointed to the tension that perhaps the middle schoolers and college students both felt: why were they really brought together? Considering that this experience was attached to the educational opportunities for both the college and middle school students, what was it that they both were learning? Scott admitted that maybe the college students were not necessary but he wanted the young student to feel "grateful" because the college students were "just trying to help." Scott's response to the student mimicked a dominant, yet paternalistic, charity discourse—someone

deemed as having something to offer gave it (whether or not it was actually needed) and the recipient was obligated to feel grateful.

Scott shared that he thought the tutors "do improve the environment of the classroom. I feel like we make it more productive. Just because I feel like the kids there think there's more people watching them so they can't get away with stuff." Scott's comment unmasked the component of Bright Horizons Tutoring that was about behavioral control. Even though Scott admitted that he did not really know how it would be if the tutors did not come, he assumed that tutors helped to make the classroom "more productive" because the students' were being monitored. Even though the curricular content was (rhetorically) prioritized in the after-school program, the racialized, behavioral expectations that accompanied the curriculum were just as significant. Perhaps that was why the college students did not receive any training in tutoring and were not required to know anything about how the students' teachers taught the material. The after-school program was just as much about controlling low-income brown bodies as it was ensuring that the students understood their homework. Through the implicit message of being present and assisting with homework help, the college students could relay the idea that school and obedience were important. Learning the content of the homework was an added bonus. Thus, while the process of demarcating valued knowledge took place through homework, prized knowledge was also modeled and distinguished through particular behaviors and attitudes. Obedience and gratitude were expected as young students learned the cultural capital required in this racial project.

Distinguishing College as Good

Bright Horizons Tutoring, in collaboration with the university, used college students as models for what the younger students were supposed to achieve one day. The site supervisors and service learning faculty encouraged the service learners to talk with the youth about college in the hopes that the conversations would interest the youth and motivate them to follow in the college students' footsteps. Daniel, an instructor quoted at the opening of the chapter, emphasized the importance of college students as role models. Here's the fuller quote in which he distinguished between service learners and the younger students they tutored:

> You may not know it but you may be leaving a lasting impression because if you go to [Valley] Housing…and you work with the teenagers…or even the young kids….They may come from a home or they come from a milieu where there are no young people who have goals, have objectives in life or are actually pursuing those objectives…who have real optimism about the future and maybe some real plans. There may be nobody they see at all in the adult world who is doing that, until you have these people who are not that much older than they are who are… going to school and they are studying. I encourage the students to talk about who you are and what you're doing, and what your plans are. But I think that's one of the most salient, one of the most valuable aspects of this whole program is modeling…Not only are our students coming into contact with people they normally wouldn't, but people they're working with are too….You know, university students. [The kids ask,] "You go to the university?" "Oh, it's possible

> to go to the university? There is a university?" Yeah, you can build a career. You can have a life.

Daniel rhetorically reinforced the knowledge and body hierarchy closely intertwined with race, class, and nation. And, as he stressed the importance of college students as role models for younger, immigrant children in a low-income community, the service learners obliged. They acted as examples for the younger students and talked with them about higher education and its benefits.

For example, Emily, who planned to go to medical school, noted how she encouraged higher education. She asked the students at Valley Learning Center what they wanted to be when they were older. Receiving answers ranging from a cop to a cook to a scientist, she told them, "Go to college…. If you do well now, you're gonna like school. Don't think of school as like a bad thing. It's gonna help you….If you like school, you further your education. You're gonna make money." Emily was familiar with the common local message of prioritizing work to pay bills over formal education. She countered that message with, "If working is important, making money is important…you'll make more money if you go to school." Emily stressed that college had an economic payoff. As she did, she subtly suggested that the younger students should take a different path after high school than many of the adults in their lives, including the adored site coordinators at Valley Learning Center.

Another service learner at Valley Learning Center echoed Emily's message. Jonah was a local, first-year student. He wrote in his final reflection:

> This volunteering was great for the community because young adults like myself can teach the younger kids to want to go to college, and have interests and

> passions. The community that surrounds them is almost like a trap because in that area a lot of the adults only have high school educations or even less. I understood that the kids looked up to their peer volunteers and I so tried to tell them about all the endless opportunities college has to offer.

Jonah realized that he was put in the position of a role model, and he hoped that by his example, he could teach the youth the importance of college rather than having them caught in the same "trap" as adults in the community with low levels of formal education. Jonah's words mirrored the rhetoric provided by society—that people with formal higher education would be valued more and have "endless opportunities" without the trappings of their current environment.

Heather said that she also tried to "role model" and encourage the young students to be interested in college. Speaking of herself, she was glad that the students had "at least…one voice in their life that [encouraged] just go to college…or just do what you want to do with your life." She noted, "[A] lot of kids would say that they were sure they were not going to go to college." But she wanted the younger students to know that life as they knew it "isn't the best that it gets."

Hi'ipoi also talked with the students about college. She shared, "I felt that it was good to expose children to somebody that looks different, but is still going to college." Hi'ipoi not only described herself as "brown" but also had tattoos on her arms, legs, and back that held significance in Native Hawaiian culture. When she asked her tutees if they planned to go to college, they told her, "No, we're not smart enough to go to college." Hi'ipoi was surprised by this response. She commented to me, "I was just like, oh my God, you're still young but you think you can't go to college already?...But I was

just like, 'No, you can go. Look I'm going to college.'" While Hi'ipoi thought it was "sad" that the young students did not see college in their future, she found it imperative to encourage them towards that goal. At the very least, she said that they "knew that all of us [tutors] were college students, which was good."

Each of the service learners advocated for college based on the messages that they had received about the good that can come from going to college. Some had likely heard that those who graduate from college earn more money over the course of their lifetimes than their peers who do not graduate college (McGlynn, 2011). The college-going encouragement promised upward social mobility in a capitalist society. Woven into the message was that graduating college increased the chances that the children would be better able to contribute to the economy through their labor, climb the economic ladder, and avoid the "trap" that their parents and neighbors were in. While well-intended, and true for some people, the college-going discourse is connected to the myth of meritocracy and the American Dream: work hard, study hard, and you will be able to gain a good job and buy a house where you can live comfortably with your family. You, too, regardless of race or citizenship status, will experience economic success. This logic purports that if people play by the rules, their lives will be stable and prosperous. If they fail, then they must have personal flaws that have prohibited them from achieving success. The emphasis on individual hard work within the meritocracy myth ignores the harsh realities of structural racism, the capitalist exploitation of labor, and the normative hierarchies of knowledge and values (Davis, 2007).

Ironically, one primary school student pointedly challenged the college students' dominant logic. When Heather asked the elementary students if they were planning to go

to college, most of them told her no. When she asked why, one of the students explained, “College is only for people who don't know how to do the job they want to do.” Heather noted that this caught her off guard, but she disclosed, “That's not false…I couldn't really argue with him.” Resisting the dominant logic that everyone should attend college, the younger student implied that it was possible to acquire knowledge outside of higher education, and this knowledge also could be valuable.

Despite this minor interruption to the prevailing college-going rhetoric, service learners, faculty, and site coordinators consistently elevated the status of formal postsecondary education over other forms of education and work, in part, to inspire young people to attend college. A similar dynamic can be seen after the passage of the Morrill Acts. The elite wanted to attract rural youth to attend college and become the new managerial class rather than go back to their farming communities (Sorber, 2018). Repeated generation after generation, knowledge produced from the university has been constructed as superior while the knowledge produced outside of it has been considered subordinate. The ontological and epistemological perspectives that shape knowledge and the bodies associated with this knowledge encode divisions of race, class, nation, intelligence, and social status. Thus, when intellectual achievement is measured by college completion (which has been largely influenced by the proliferation of land-grant institutions), a project of “muted racism” transpires (Davis, 2007, p. 346). In other words, encouraging college reinforces the value hierarchy that has been problematic between higher education and almost any other opportunity that people pursue post high school. In the case of these service learners, neither their college instructors nor the site coordinators of Bright Horizons Tutoring prompted the college students to question their

role in maintaining the myth of the educational American Dream or the ideologies behind what they were learning. As they had been encouraged to do, college students considered learning in the context of college "good."

Even though the staff at Valley Learning Center hoped that the youth would attend college and wanted the service learners to talk with the youth about their college experiences, they also tempered their enthusiasm with a dose of reality. Nelani, one of the site coordinators, shared that a young student said he wanted to be a police officer when he grew up but that he did not want to attend college. Her response to the student was, "Well, if college [is] not for you, then it's not for you, but you still can be [a] policeman." She explained, "We try always to tell the kids that they can do anything and everything if they just stay on the right track in life." This "right track" was reinforced through the college students' presence and the behaviors they embodied.

I am not suggesting that elementary or middle school students should not hear about college or not have visions of attending college. However, how those messages are structured is worth interrogation. Within the frame of neoliberal governmentality, institutions of higher education have enlisted the very bodies they once excluded to promote the message that those who attend college value more (economically and socially) than those who do not. This reifies and further entrenches the stratification of which bodies become ideal citizens and which do not. In a reiterative way, the realization of educational inequality furthers the "college for all" mentality. Specifically, the acknowledgement that there is differentiated value between those who are and are not college graduates re-emphasizes the point that everyone should attend college in order to remove the economic variance between said people. Three major problems with

this logic are 1) formal education is not designed for everyone to succeed, 2) it dismisses knowledge learned outside of higher education as irrelevant, and 3) it does not take into consideration the other factors that influence people's experiences of employment and income (e.g., individual and institutional discrimination; social networks; health; care-taking responsibilities; etc.).

Building Empathy for "Others"

For all of the problematic dynamics discussed, a reasonable question is why college students and younger students in the Valley neighborhood were brought together through Bright Horizons Tutoring. Was there a rationale besides trying to improve the younger students' academic learning? The answer to this question emerged in discussions among faculty members as well as in-depth interviews. Beyond enhancing disciplinary knowledge, this civic engagement opportunity was offered to encourage college students to become involved in spaces outside of their routine social interactions that would allow them to build empathy and their awareness of social inequality.

Daniel, the instructor quoted at the beginning of the chapter, hoped that through service learning students would "broaden their sense of social conditions…have a sense of the deeply rooted unfairness and inequities in society…[and] creat[e] some sort of empathy, real basic empathy toward the other who might be less fortunate." Dee, another faculty member, referred to these objectives as "getting better citizens by putting students out there."

In a small group conversation among faculty members who were reflecting on their use of service learning, Daniel commented that many students have a "transformative experience" through service learning that "makes a mark on their

consciousness." He offered, "Self-awareness is the hardest thing for human beings," yet he noticed in students' final papers that a recurring theme was "how fortunate I am." Daniel reflected, "That's a positive thing. At least that's the beginning of something to build on." Dee agreed, "That's a good start." Daniel continued, sharing, "If I send students to a homeless shelter, they come out understanding that homeless are real people." Dee added, "Or realize you [could be] one of them yourself." Both Daniel and Dee were interested in having service learners encounter people who could help the students build their empathy and their political awareness, both of which are important factors in social justice work.

However, Allie, another faculty member, noted the heavy emphasis placed on empathy and spoke to the challenge of trying to "get beyond teaching empathy." In an interview, she explained that the purpose of having service learners work with Bright Horizons Tutoring was to have them understand "deep educational inequalities…and the very intentional underfunding and underresourcing of public schools." She said that service learning could give students the "tools" to interrupt "cultural deficiency language, which is something that our students just absorb" through dominant stereotypes. However, Allie admitted that instructors struggled with making connections between service experiences and core curricular topics like racial and ethnic stratification or issues of Indigeneity. Explaining that "it's hard to critique" the "changing hearts and minds" approach that several colleagues stressed, Allie disclosed that many students' reflections were similar to the popular memoir *Eat, Pray, Love,* an autobiography wherein a white woman from the U.S. travels the world in a tour of self-discovery after experiencing a divorce (Gilbert, 2009). Even though Allie recognized the

importance of students' personal transformation, she asserted that it needed to go farther than that. Otherwise, similar to the memoir, learning ended up being expressed as a "confessional" tale in "neoliberal" fashion. In other words, empathy was used as a mode of acquiring knowledge about oneself. Specifically, self-discovery (or self-transformation) occurred through interaction with "others."

Pedwell (2012) offers a slightly different critique of empathy that can be helpful to further understanding what happens within service learning projects. She highlights how empathy is used to acquire knowledge about "others." Her analysis is about transnational immersion trips, but her argument can be easily applied to service learning. Pedwell asserts that people (e.g., service learners) feel empathy through their interactions with different people and places. And through this *feeling*, privileged people assume they have come to "know" the "truth" about different social circumstances (p. 171). In short, feelings become the way in which privileged people know things about "other" people. Thus, empathy operates as a "technology of access" (Pedwell, p. 172). In an interview for the current study, a top university administrator echoed this sentiment, sharing, "We can take [students] into neighborhoods that they wouldn't normally go into and help them into volunteer kinds of service activities. Kind of great, you know, open up windows for them to see and walk in someone else's shoes."

This access to the "truth" by "walk[ing] in someone else's shoes" (which, it is important to remember, has been facilitated by programs that carry political objectives and has been funded by the state), hailed service learners into a sense of responsibility. Combining Pedwell's critique with Allie's observation, within the context of service learning, college students were poised to learn more about themselves and their own

social position as they simultaneously elicited knowledge about "other" people and conditions (Pedwell, 2012). Specifically, Pedwell (2012) argues, those who understand what it *feels like* to be poor or an immigrant (which they access through their empathic experiences), become responsible for making better decisions (through policy, voting, individual choices, etc.). Further, within the context of neoliberal governmentality, interactions with those Daniel referred to as "less fortunate," are likely to enhance service learners' (marketable) "moral and affective capacities" while making the people toward whom empathy is directed fixed and essentialized (Pedwell, 2012, p. 172). Unless (and sometimes even if) educators examine these intricate dynamics with students, the empathetic views reinforce simplistic notions of race, class, and nation. Incidentally, the university worked as the contractor to create extractive experiences in a "safe" way. The administrator above mentioned, "It's a wonderful opportunity to give [students] experiences that otherwise would be difficult or challenging but we can offer in a safe environment." She implied that the interactions among people from very different social situations would not be as possible or even as "safe" if the university did not construct them. Engaging with youth in the Valley neighborhood would not be as available for emotional and knowledge extraction if the university was not involved.

The arrangement of educators relying on interpersonal exposure with people experiencing severe exploitation in order for college students to "know" the uncertainty of basic life necessities remained problematic. Chad, one of the service learning instructors, questioned this practice. He shared that college students enjoyed tutoring and playing with children through Bright Horizons Tutoring. However, he commented that while the opportunity "expands their world of like, 'Oh wow, these kids are great kids

and stuff,' it can also harden some of their perspective of the impoverishment of a particular group of people. Like 'Oh those poor things.'" He continued, "Paternalism gets reinforced in ways that you can't always control." Chad's comment exposed a deep challenge with a simplistic version of building empathy—it can reinforce self-superiority through a feeling of pity. Another tricky implication of building empathy is that as service learners are inspired to act on their individually transformed, newfound knowledge, they are also encouraged to develop policy and practices imbued with their interpretation of underresourced communities as opposed to joining in solidarity with people who have perpetually been pushed to the margins despite continuous efforts to work for better social conditions. This dynamic repeats the familiar pattern of missionaries working to civilize Native Peoples into dominant behaviors; the rhetoric of democracy and the practice of domination are simultaneously employed.

Pedwell does not have any easy answers for the tension of needing empathy for social justice work yet realizing that within such unequal power dynamics, empathy is employed in extractive ways. However, she makes a couple of suggestions. First, she asserts that privileged people need to acknowledge their complicity within current social conditions. Second, she draws upon Grewal (2005) to emphasize the possibilities that can be found in the contradictory spaces of neoliberalism. Specifically, she advocates for imagining different power relations and creating moments of ambivalence as ways to disrupt the seemingly commonsense logic that neoliberalism purports.

Idealized Neoliberal Citizenship

Utilizing the lens of neoliberal governmentality and idealized citizenship, we see through the mechanism of homework help how college students were used in the process

of distinguishing and shaping the bodies and behavior of children in a low-income, immigrant, community of color. As the program was structured so that the children would be exposed and socialized into the expected behaviors associated with formal postsecondary education, they were implicitly and explicitly receiving the message that if they attended college, their bodies would be valued more—both socially and economically.

My point here is not to condemn service learning tutoring programs or university education. However, I am highlighting how service learners and the students they tutored were positioned in ways that reinforced hierarchies of value—hierarchies that echoed missionary practices. This started with how instructors and site coordinators described the neighborhood and sites to service learners. Telling service learners that the neighborhood was less fortunate, alerting them not to wear red because it was a gang color or not to leave anything in their car because it might get broken into, and instructing them not to ask the children if they ate breakfast or brushed their teeth already framed the experience for negative expectations. It did not take much work for the service learners to pair these messages with societal notions of material poverty and then reproduce hierarchical valuations of bodies and knowledge.

Practices like tutoring, which are often taken for granted as "good," are actually rife with all kinds of problematic stratification that emphasizes the knowledge of formal education and implicitly devalues the knowledge of low-income, immigrant and Indigenous families. Simultaneously, this style of service learning has the capacity to turn college students into tools of neoliberal governmentality as they are positioned to be ideal citizens primed for managing the behavior of young students who precariously

depend on the state for basic necessities. I do not intend to point blame at college students for this patronizing dynamic—or what they learn from it. Rather, institutions of higher education have created the discursive practice in which college students are supposed to feel as though they have something that younger public school students do not—the intellectual, social, and cultural capital to succeed in college. And, the college students are supposed to share this capital with aspiring (as well as disinterested) youth. Service learning, designed like this, inadvertently advances a neoliberal racial project of governmentality.

To use service learning within a tutoring program in ways that can disrupt rather than further entrench a neoliberal racial project, the university-community partnerships and tutoring programs need to be interrogated as well as differently designed and articulated. In the section below, I present a vision of resistance that could alter the way service learning within after-school help is framed, thereby possibly changing what is experienced and learned for both college and primary students.

Imagining a Racial Project of Resistance

Despite the complex dynamics detailed above, there remained significant possibilities hidden in the interstitial spaces of Bright Horizons Tutoring. There were primary school youth who were excited about learning and brought their positivity to the classroom and after-school experiences; there was a structure set up between the university and community partners that brought people together who might not otherwise meet; there were site supervisors who were interested in seeing the learning and growth of students in the entire P-20 spectrum; and there were college faculty and courses that encouraged students to spend time engaging in the learning process with young students.

What might happen if Bright Horizons Tutoring included a critical analysis of institutions and social conditions, a focus on cultural values, and advocacy for better conditions? This almost happened at Valley Learning Center.

At the beginning of the school year, a local labor union (the site featured in the next chapter) was poised to go on a major strike and they planned to enlist the support of as many networks as they could. Allie, a faculty member who worked closely with the union suggested that service learners at Valley Learning Center lead a project with the youth that focused on labor issues. The idea was open for creative interpretation—it could be an art project, a lesson about local labor history and the current strike, a facilitated conversation about how many jobs their parents worked or how much time they were able to see them at night, reading books about labor leaders, etc. When proposed to Valley Learning Center site coordinators, they were interested. One of the lead students from the service learning office also was supportive of the idea, even if a little hesitant. She noted in a couple of meetings that she did not want to bring "politics" into Valley Learning Center because the youth already faced enough teasing based on their ethnic identity. She did not want there to be any additional reason for the youth to be targeted.

In the midst of a project being decided, it was a month into the semester, and the college students were getting ready to begin their service hours. However, unexpectedly, they were told that they were not allowed to come to Valley Learning Center. The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Valley Learning Center and the university was being re-reviewed by legal teams. Valley Learning Center was now requiring that all of the college students undergo state background checks to volunteer.

While this was routine for the elementary and middle schools, to date, it had not been enforced by Valley Learning Center. By the time the MOU was reviewed, revised, and approved, and all of the service learners completed the state background checks (at a cost of $15 to each student), it was a couple weeks later. The union's strike had already started, and the nonprofit that managed Valley Housing refused any project that would associate Valley Learning Center with the strike. They did not want to draw attention, nor did they want to take sides on an issue they thought might be divisive within the neighborhood. The site said "no," and that was the end of the conversation.

What was a possibility to delve into a more complex understanding of the conditions that shaped the students' and their families' lives, was forfeited because the management of the site did not want to be seen as political. This reluctance to being political is a major factor in the reproduction of the racial and economic status quo. When community sites are not interested in altering the power dynamics in which they are involved, this not only reinforces inequality but also teaches students at every level that an assimilation model is what takes precedent. In Bright Horizons Tutoring, assisting elementary and middle school students to have acceptable behaviors, including desiring college, was the goal. Additionally, the dynamic of valued knowledge coming from outside the neighborhood (from the university) was reinforced. Even though the activity of facilitating learning about labor issues would have been a small disruption, it could have been what Omi and Winant (2015) term *rearticulation* of a racial project that would spark change so that learning could happen in an entirely different way—a way that would generate community solidarity and resistance to being racially governed and exploited. Indicative of racial hegemony, the possibilities of calling attention to oppressive dynamics and the

latent power of different knowledge production (e.g., knowledge from the lived experiences of youth and their families) were feared and thus contained.

CHAPTER FIVE

MOBILIZE!: Service Learning through Advocacy

My feminist students eventually get very dissatisfied with [the union's] model and I want them to be. – Allie, Instructor

Everywhere we go
People wanna know
Who we are
So we tell them
We are the union
The mighty, mighty union

In the tourist part of the city, you could hear this energetic chant from the bullhorns on the strike line. Depending on the shift, the picket line consisted of 20 to 50 people, all wearing red t-shirts. Hanging down the front of their bodies were poster board signs that identified the union or had a caricature of a worker on it. The strike line was full of enthusiasm. MOBILIZE! members took selfies with one another and videoed the strike with their phones. Workers of varying ages, even an older gentleman with a cane, circled the front of the hotel while responding to the chants led through the bullhorn. The tone and tempo of the workers' responses matched the call of the chant leader.

Who's got the power?
We've got the power!
What kind of power?
Union power!

A recent college graduate who had been volunteering with MOBILIZE! throughout her college years and then became an organizer for the union smiled and hopped along with pep as she called out the chants. Joining the workers on the picket line were service

learners. Together, they chanted of solidarity, the power of unions, and the reality that human bodies were not meant to be machines.

MOBILIZE! regularly held actions in front of hotels, sometimes because workers at the hotel wanted to unionize but the hotel management refused, other times for better working conditions and wages for union members. Service learners routinely participated in these actions with workers. To gain a spot as a service learner with the union, the students had to meet with the site coordinator for what seemed like an interview. Allie, a faculty member who worked with the site commented that the interest and commitment level required of students working with this site was quite high. “It’s a very selective process. They hand pick the people.” She further disclosed, “They want someone who shows promise in being a labor organizer.”

The site coordinator, Jennica, described the selectivity a bit differently. In the one-on-one meeting with the student, Jennica noted that she was upfront about what type of work the students would be doing. She told them, “This isn't an easy site…You will be expected to come to actions…So if you're not going to enjoy holding a picket sign and walking around a hotel then this might not be the best site for you.”

In that same one-one-one meeting, Jennica asked about the students’ goals, wanting to ensure that they learned or gained experience in something that interested them. She commented, “I'm not trying to extract free labor from you or anything. I actually want you to learn and grow from this, but I need an understanding of why do you want to do your service learning here.”

Rather than welcoming absolutely every student to do their service learning at the union regardless of their perspectives or commitment level, the site coordinator

explicitly outlined her expectations for students. Students were required to participate in actions and they were asked to take an interest in their own learning. While most of the students she met with took the challenge, some students opted out of doing their service learning at the union and chose a different site.

In this chapter, I describe how the community site, MOBILIZE!, framed the service learning experience for students in a way that taught about economic justice and challenged neoliberal notions of ideal citizenry. The content and affect of the labor union's training were ones of advocacy for the working class and resistance to capitalism. While subtle, MOBILIZE! was also a site for racial formation. Most of the union members were workers of color, many of them recent immigrants to the U.S., who joined together and confronted corporate management and elites for better working conditions. In addition, MOBILIZE! organized citizenship drives in order to assist union members who were eligible to apply for citizenship.[8] With MOBILIZE!, college students were positioned as learners and workers in solidarity with union members. As with any project, this did not always go perfectly, but the union realized the importance of framing service in a way that allowed the college students to envision their own identity and interests as being in collaboration with people advocating for more just working conditions. As students learned about systemic oppression (e.g., capitalism), practiced advocacy and opposition, and found importance in collaboration, MOBILIZE! offered a possibility of collective action. I highlight that ironically, in disrupting the

[8] Because Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) raids and deportation was an increasing concern for green card holders (lawful, permanent or conditional residents) within the national political climate, MOBILIZE! wanted to assist the members who qualified to apply for U.S. citizenship.

dominant discourses that produced ideal citizens (e.g., challenging authority and capitalism), the union constructed a different sort of hierarchy—one that was focused on efficiency of relationships, the ability to be vocal, organize peers, and step into leadership. Working outside of hierarchical valuations within a neoliberal context proved quite difficult.

Orienting, framing and positioning as strategy

At the first larger group meeting that service learners attended, an orientation of sorts, they were mixed in with various community members. They had been invited to the Activists meeting, which consisted of union staff members and community residents, including high school students that had an Activists club. In a field note, I wrote:

After signing in, people were encouraged to help themselves to a slice of pizza and water. With plates of food, attendees settled into their seats at rectangular tables shaped in a U. Once everyone arrived, Cory, one of the staff members, asked the group gathered what they thought of when they heard the word union. Someone called out, "Unions protect incompetence." With a mounting list, including a couple of positive connotations, Cory asked if anyone had heard that unions were corrupt. Lea, one of the college students, emphatically answered, "Yes!" Cory let out a chuckle and explained that some unions had leadership that were disconnected from their members and some unions were corrupt. But, he noted that unions had the opportunity to organize and to come together. He said, "It's a basic right we all have, no matter how much Wall Street firms and Trump wants to hurt us."

Cory continued with the mini-lesson. Unions have been shrinking in Hawai'i and across the country. He informed the group, "Less than 5% [of workers] are unionized in

the U.S. because unions don't have the best reputation." Because unions are small, "we have to find ways to connect with the local community." Cory explained that in order to garner the support of the broader community, they formed the Activists. (Field note Oct. 10, 2017)

An off-shoot of the union, the Activists was a growing group of community members who worked for justice and built collective power through various community organizing efforts. They formed not only to bolster the union's causes but also to address social and economic issues that impacted residents of the state as a whole. Believing that change is created through the power of people collectively organizing, the Activists took on campaigns that ranged from affordable housing and minimum wage increases to immigration, citizenship, and pesticide usage around schools and residential communities.

The union staff explained that all of these issues were connected because they affected the well-being of all residents in the state. More so, citizenship was a prime concern for many hotel workers since they were immigrants who had legal documentation but never applied for citizenship. Given increased federal attention on deportation, the Activists planned a day where they would assist people in completing the citizenship application.

During this Activists meeting, the service learners were also treated to a basic lesson in capitalism. One of the staff members invited everyone to an upcoming action where union members planned to hold a one-day strike for better working conditions. The staff member gave a recent history of what led up to this action. Under the direction of the new hotel owner, in 2009, many of the hotel rooms were sold as condos. This

resulted in less work for the employees. The union lost half of the membership at that hotel. Due to the nationwide financial crisis at the time, the workers made compromises in order for the hotel not undergo bankruptcy. Fast forward to 2017, and the hotel was thriving. However, the ownership refused to give the previous gains back to the workers. Among the complaints were that employees were not allowed to eat their Christmas dinner together; they were paid $3.50 lower per hour than other hotel workers in the city; and they had less vacation time than their peers at other hotels. The staff member claimed, "We can't let these companies come in and take over. Working people suffer. These companies come in and take and take and take." This story illustrated to service learners how capitalism works on a basic level—the owners profit while the workers are exploited.

Service learners attended meetings of the Activists (like the one described above), sat in on hotel workers' committee meetings, researched political officials' positions, submitted public testimony during legislative hearings, and participated in scheduled actions outside of hotels. Through each of these opportunities, students maintained their position as learners as they grasped different components of designing and executing a campaign.

Important to note is that while the discourse and actions of MOBILIZE! made prevalent distinctions in socio-economic class, the site as a racial project was more implicit. Race was not always referenced within MOBILIZE!, but it was obvious that the vast majority of union members and staff were working-class people of color in conflict with the (mostly Japanese and white, U.S.) capitalist owners and management. Volunteering with the union was notably different than working with other service

learning sites, mostly because with the union, students learned to do things that were directly opposed to what U.S., white, middle-class normed schools taught: challenging authority and capitalism. This was intentional. MOBILIZE! offered a framework that positioned the service learners as students of labor organizing.

Framing issues in a way that garners support is key to social movements (Snow & Benford, 1988). What was particularly powerful about how MOBILIZE! and the Activists framed issues was that they were large enough for almost everyone (excluding the corporate elite) to see themselves as deeply impacted. Issues like affordable housing, high cost of living, and better wages were vital to the lives of all the city's residents. Thus, service learners could easily identify with the points of advocacy. Providing a common target (e.g., corporations or government) allowed union members and other community activists to join in solidarity with one another. Even if the issues were highly political or seemingly complicated (e.g., Airbnb's impact on affordable housing), with the assistance of the union's research team, a straightforward analysis was devised to help people comprehend how the given issue would benefit or harm the local community as a whole.

Connected to how the union framed issues was how they positioned service learners. They expected that students would maintain their role as learner as they volunteered with the union. Starting with the one-on-one meeting with the site coordinator, students were positioned as individuals who had their own learning goals. They were not treated simply as bodies in a production line of work that needed to be accomplished. Nor were they solely viewed as students needing to complete service hours for a class requirement. Even though most students were not very familiar with

unions and did not know exactly how to articulate their own goals or interests, the fact that the question was posed framed the relationship as one wherein students were treated as colleagues with individual thoughts and agency. The students were expected to be there because they wanted to learn about the union and worker rights. To do so, they needed to join in solidarity with workers advocating for better working and living conditions.

Even as they stood in solidarity with the workers, it was understood that students were learning, experientially, about labor issues, organizing, and advocacy. Specifically, the structure was designed so that college students could learn from working-class people of color—mostly women—who were exercising leadership and speaking up for themselves and for one another. There was great power in this, partly because working-class leaders are rarely highlighted in dominant society or media. Nonetheless, they exist, and play a major role in shaping the nature of work environments. Having college students see workers challenging authority was influential. Acknowledging, respecting, and bolstering the everyday leaders and workers offered models and mentors who were relatable to students, many of whom had family members employed in tourism or other working-class jobs.

In addition to supporting the students in maintaining their role as learners (as opposed to expecting them to be an "expert," as typically was the case in tutoring), MOBILIZE! intentionally positioned students as workers. Most students either worked on campus or in a minimum wage job. If students viewed themselves and those they knew as workers, they could more readily relate with challenges, conditions, and tensions that union members faced, and therefore join them in advocacy. This was

strategic. If MOBILIZE! did not recognize the students as workers, it may have been tempting for students to buy into dominant corporate messages that hotels support the region's tourist economy, and therefore dismiss laborers' concerns and corporations' ever-increasing profit margins. Most businesses associated with the tourism industry advanced the rhetoric that workers should be grateful for jobs (e.g., what other jobs would there be if it wasn't for the tourist industry?).

Positioning students as both learners and workers was deliberate; it was a way to garner more support for MOBILIZE! and the Activists. It was an "investment we're making," Cory explained. He shared that working with service learners "really is about building community and investing in ourselves." He continued, "It is very much in our self-interest…this is not charitable work that we're doing to make ourselves feel good… this is very much part of the strategy to build a movement." In other words, educating students about labor issues and community organizing around common interests was a way that the union could ensure that people were trained to work together for a "kind of Hawai'i [that] we want to live in…that meets our needs." This orientation was about collectively building the type of society that union members and the Activists desired.

Faculty understood the strategy of MOBILIZE!. One instructor, Chad, noted that the labor union staff dedicated considerably more time and effort in training and educating service learners than other sites. He shared, "I worry sometimes that the amount of hours that we allocate for service learning may not be worthwhile for their input if the student doesn't perform really well in the kind of tasks that they need." However, he reasoned that in working with many different students, the union may "get someone like [Alyssa]…[and] develop that gem of a person into somebody that's much

more engaged and active." Chad realized that MOBILIZE! was invested in training college students about the values of labor unions but simultaneously hoped to cultivate a few strong labor leaders.

By teaching about the perils of capitalism and asking college students to join in solidarity with workers, the union's service learning efforts subverted dominant discourses that construct the ideal citizen. MOBILIZE! was inviting students to prioritize worker rights over hegemonic notions of corporations needing the profits they reap. Additionally, the union expected a collective orientation rather than an individual one. The needs of the larger community of working-class employees took precedence over individual interests. Of course, this did not mean that individual workers (or students) did not have particular concerns. Indeed, they did. But, MOBILIZE! was careful to keep those conflicts at a minimum (especially to the public's view) by focusing on common goals.

To their credit, the union's staff recognized its imperfections. Cory disclosed:

> I'm not here at the union because I think the union is a perfect instrument or tool for the vision of the community that I want to see. And it's not even because it's the best thing that we got going, but it is fundamentally one. I don't know if there is like a perfect instrument or tool, for me…It really is about the relationships that we build with each other. Right? And that's the most valuable thing for I think any organization really. And it, for unions in particular, it has to start with our own members. We do a lot of preaching to the community and to the members about what it means to be in the union. You know, this is your union, you're the union. But, it takes a lot. It takes a real meaningful relation to push

> somebody to overcome their fears of acting like a leader. And helping collectively to create that vision. But yeah, the union is an imperfect tool for so much of that vision that so many of us may have. But it has the fundamental elements that does at least accomplish the important part of bringing people together on a front based on a common set of interests, that is based on building those meaningful relationships.

Cory realized that the union was not perfect, but he valued building meaningful relationships where people could tell their stories and then learn to advocate for their shared interests, particularly the interests that came into conflict with those who controlled their well-being.

Challenging Authority

As a service learning site, MOBILIZE! had a very different look and feel than any of the other sites. Working-class people, most of them women of color, joined together to demand better working conditions. They learned to tell their personal stories of struggle and resilience to policy makers. They confronted the boss. They chanted. They striked. And, as they made noise and addressed serious tensions, they had fun with one another. They did things that working-class people have been socialized *not* to do; namely, challenge authority and make waves (Lareau, 2002). Cory, a staff member for the union, commented that these things can be "uncomfortable" because they are "not something we are trained to do…growing up through K to 12 [and] in college."

One of the service learners whose public school education did not teach him to challenge authority was David, a tall, skinny, first-year student with a crew cut and a big smile. Another service learner was Alyssa, a third-year student with infectious energy.

Both David and Alyssa were in different service learning courses during different semesters, but they attended the same high school and grew up in the same low-income neighborhood. According to Alyssa, their high school had a "bad reputation." It was known for the number of fights that occurred and the amount of times the police were called. The high school's legitimate authority encouraged maintaining social order, even though Alyssa said that "[the fights] was just for fun….they were all just all playing around."

At the start of the semester, David was without a job. On the day that his class was introduced to each of the service learning sites, he opted for the site that was affiliated with hotels. He thought that the experience was going to be like an internship that would "help [him] get experience with the hotel industry" so that he could get a job. Needing to find employment, he jumped at the opportunity. He was quite "surprised" when he learned more about the union and what it did. Prior to his service learning experience, David thought unions were "corrupt" and that the leadership was about benefitting themselves rather than the actual workers. He had heard from his uncle, who worked for the hotels, that protests and strikes were "useless." David said, "I thought the effort they put towards actions and strikes [wa]s a waste of time because only the authorities with power can make changes." Even with his surprise about the service learning opportunity and his misgivings about unions, David maintained his commitment to the service site.

For both David and Alyssa, attending the union's actions was the first time that they had participated in anything of the sort. David said that going to the union protest "felt scary at first because of how the audience looked at us weird or commented

negatively." When he arrived at the front of the hotel for his first action, he picked up a sign and joined the line, chanting along with the workers. He noted that some of the tourists told the strikers to "keep it down" since they didn't "pay this much for the hotel stay to be hearing us rallying." But, he realized that by "irritat[ing]" the guests, the strikers were "getting people's attention and informing them on the issue." Despite his initial nervousness, David noted that it "turned out to be cool." As he excitedly pulled out the sheet of paper with the list of chants, he shared, "I see it makes a difference. It brings community attention and annoys hotels" that aren't giving fair wages.

The interesting part for Alyssa was "seeing the reaction from the guests [and] people just walking on street." She initially thought that people, especially tourists, would be "snobby" because they would view the action as a disruption to their "fancy" Hawai'i vacation. However, her experience was different. She said that people were interested in learning more, and they responded with, "Yes, you're fighting for your benefits and you need that." Pleasantly surprised, she noted, "Literally some would come and join, like right straight off the street kind of a deal." She was most impressed with "when we saw the workers themselves…walk out and join the rally. It was just amazing to see like th[e]…energy that they had. They were just screaming at the top of their lungs." The energy of people coming together and advocating for better working conditions felt inspiring and powerful for Alyssa.

For most service learners, like David and Alyssa, this was their inaugural engagement with a union, let alone a worker protest or strike. While they had already met one-on-one with a union staff member and had typically attended a community organizing meeting or hotel worker meeting prior to participating in an action, this was

the first time they gathered with workers in a public setting, carrying a sign, and chanting for the union members to receive better working conditions. Students were unsure what to expect. Jennica, the site coordinator, revealed,

> For a number of students, our actions are the very first action they had ever been to.…A lot of them afterward would tell me like, "Oh, I was really scared at first because I didn't know what to expect. I thought it would just be like a riot or something. And then…I finally went and I was like, oh, I was actually surprised at how calm it was. And that it was actually fun and that, you know, people were pretty disciplined. And like, it's not a riot." And so, I get a lot of those comments.

The fact that students held assumptions that protests or strikes were going to be similar to riots pointed to the types of messages that had been relayed to them about people coming together and demanding different conditions. The imagery of protests as riots, which likely came from a combination of the media, their schools, and their families, were opposite of how they were hailed as neoliberal citizen subjects. Ideal citizens within a neoliberal framework were supposed to engage in the community, but in ways that did not create too much tension. Thus, participating in a protest made service learners uncomfortable at first; they thought they would be violating the behaviors of good (obedient) citizenry. Ironically, but perhaps unbeknownst to the college students, MOBILIZE!'s actions in front of workplaces always fell within legal boundaries because union staff did not want to put any of the workers in jeopardy of being arrested (and possibly detained and deported if they were not U.S. citizens). The union obtained permits, typically had a police presence, and were very orderly (e.g., stop lights were always obeyed and union volunteers ensured safe passage for pedestrians). His initial

concerns allayed, David wrote in a reflection that the first protest he attended had "cops around to patrol and ensure our safety." The second action he went to was "scarier as it was a smaller group and no police to protect us." Yet, David, as well as other service learners, soon realized that demanding better working conditions did not equate to their images of riots. Even though dominant messages taught them not to challenge authority, they were beginning to understand that protesting could happen in a collective and disciplined manner, and that dissention could yield positive results. MOBILIZE! offered a way to be an active member in society that differed from the idealized neoliberal citizen archetype.

Challenging Capitalism

Whether on the strike line or in the union headquarters, the oppositional frame to authority at MOBILIZE! was palpable. Even though union members and staff greeted one another with aloha hugs and smiles, the common understanding that people were coming together to push against the unfair conditions created by capitalism generated a sense of agitation. Rather than entertaining dominant messages about trickle-down economics, or advocating for charity, union affiliates were clear that corporations and government institutions needed to be held accountable for disparate conditions. And, they believed that *collectively* demanding better conditions would give them the strength needed to achieve these demands. The union rubbed against dominant norms by teaching the hazards of capitalism and how to collectively challenge authority. While formal education in the U.S. has traditionally taught students the values of individualism, meritocracy, hard work, and the American Dream, the union cracked those myths wide

open. They explained how capitalism relies on inequality and how workers must remain vigilant in order to not be overly-exploited.

Lea, an energetic third-year student who was also in the military, commented that MOBILIZE! "really gave me a lot of insight on the big ideas that are always going around like capitalism." She continued, "That's the one thing that really drives everything around here, like profit over people." David's perspective was similar as he spoke about the work of the union: the workers "can't get paid the wage they…deserve because of the company's greed of money to profit more by paying workers less." Alyssa, shared a related perspective. She claimed, "We think we're in debt so we need all these business people to come in, but," she continued, "we forget about the little people when you start bringing in all these business people." Alyssa was referencing how large corporations from out-of-state were encouraged to enter the local market to create jobs. However, she knew that corporate executives were more concerned about their profits than they were the needs of workers.

The union reiterated pitfalls of capitalism to the service learners through each point of advocacy. Whether explicitly addressing the dynamics of union members' workplaces larger community issues like affordable housing, the union operated from the fundamental orientation of conflict theory (Marx & Engels, 2012). And, because the students could relate to this from their own life experiences, they internalized it and were able to articulate it with ease.

Service learners also learned that an effective way to confront capitalism was through collective campaign efforts. College students joined with Activists' efforts to address affordable housing through a campaign to tighten regulations on vacation

rentals. Arguing that vacation rentals drove up the cost of housing, the Activists lobbied city council members to propose legislation that would create restrictions on short-term vacation rental companies. Through meetings about the proposed legislation, David learned about how corporations like Airbnb worked and how their operation in the city negatively impacted hotel workers, renters, and home owners. He submitted testimony online in support of the proposed legislation and informed others about the legislation so they could do the same. Then, David, along with union staff and members attended the city council hearing to support the stricter regulations. Working with local politicians to propose legislation that would reign in corporate exploitation, spreading awareness about the issue, and then showing up, together, was part of the strategy of opposing capitalism.

Reflecting back on his service learning experience, David told me, "I didn't expect it to be like this." What he liked was that he "got to be a part of the community." He stressed, "It is important for people to realize if we participate and stay together as one then we could have authority." He shared that the government "serves the people, but they need to know what we want. This is why community groups are so important." The meetings and actions David attended showed him how people could come together, make hard decisions, articulate their demands, bring attention to the unfair treatment, and create change. Citing the Activists' meetings at the union headquarters as "the most memorable experience," David was impressed by about the power of collective decision-making, voice, and action to challenge unjust circumstances, including capitalism.

The critiques of capitalism and advocacy strategies modeled by the union and the Activists impacted students' perspectives and stances. Lea said from her time volunteering with the union she learned, "It's okay to question [public officials] if they're not being accountable for not doing anything right." This felt different than what she learned through formal education. Noting the distinctions, Lea commented that what she gained through the union and the Activists felt more "relevant." She shared, "I'm actually learning a lot more about the government and issues through my interaction with people in [the Activists]." She reasoned that "maybe school is biased, that's why." Speaking directly to the way that most formal education is intended to control bodies and assimilate them into white, middle-class workers, she commented that people are used to listening to authority and "just learn to live with it" despite circumstances being hard. Lea expressed, "I'm done dealing with things. Like I don't think it's a very constructive way to live. To just deal with circumstances. You should probably just change them."

Lea not only questioned authority but also challenged capitalism and how it shaped the institutions that structured everyone's lives. More specifically, Lea spoke to how social institutions, like schools and employment, did not always work for the people they were intended to serve. Rather than simply following along with the whim of decision-makers, Lea felt it important to demand accountability. Her insistence on accountability carried over from the union to her university.

Earlier in the semester, the university sent an email stating that one of the libraries on campus was shortening its hours. Lea was in class when she received the email, and she was outraged. She often worked at the library late into the night because

between classes, work, and service, her daytime hours were already consumed. Directly after class, she walked to the undergraduate student services office to ask if the student government had been informed about this significant change before the email was sent. She was referred to different offices and given a couple of email addresses before she found out that the student government had only received word of this change a couple days prior. This infuriated Lea. She shared that a few weeks earlier, her tuition increased. Rather than university officials asking for student input about the change, the student government was merely told that the library hours were shortening. Lea made the connection that her tuition bill increased while student services were shrinking. The university was operating in an economic framework that was concerned about the bottom-line. Lea recognized the theme of "profit over people" and was displeased. She admitted that before her time with the Activists, she would have gone along with the change quietly. Lea stated, "I know that they shouldn't be doing that and…we can do something." Now, she felt "more justified" to question the legitimacy of the change.

In addition to MOBILIZE! teaching service learners about the pitfalls of capitalism, it stressed the importance of different forms of capital, particularly cultural, social, and human capital. Despite high energy and routine agitation, community organizing required patience. Changes did not occur overnight or in one session. Rather, building a movement and cultivating change took time and dedication to relationships. Lea described that when she first started volunteering with the union, she attended many meetings—meetings with the Activists, meetings with hotel workers about contract negotiations, and different talks on campus and around Honolulu. She commented, "I didn't really understand that at first…And I was like, why?…This so pointless."

However, over time, Lea realized that part of community organizing was about meeting people and building relationships in order to get them to join in collective efforts.

Thus, when Lea wanted to ignite change regarding the library's reduced schedule, she engaged with her various forms of capital. She had enough cultural capital to know which university offices to visit. She knew that the administration should have sent a proposal to the student government before making a decision that impacted students. Lea also used her social capital to spread the word about the issue. And, she encouraged as many people as she could to use their human capital to send emails registering concerns about the decreased hours. After receiving a number of student complaints, the library extended their schedule for the following semester. Lea, along with others she enlisted, cautioned university administrators that they could not simply count the number of library users during certain periods and conclude reduced services as a cost-saving mechanism. Instead, they needed to engage the people who would be impacted by the decision.

Complicating the picture

While the union as a service learning site exhibited radical possibilities, it was not perfect. One of the faculty members who utilized service learning and was quite familiar with the union critiqued, "I'm not even sure [the union] is basically involved in socially transformative work. They're focused on keeping their own membership." This faculty member knew that expanding the membership of the union was one of its primary goals. He also was aware of the high expectations the union held to be hired as an organizer. One of his former students who worked with the union was required to enlist a target number of hotel workers as leaders in order to be offered a full-time job.

The union was structured a bit like a pyramid organization. They referred to it as a "committee system."

Lea shared the rationale of the committee system and how it linked to community organizing. She explained:

> As an organizer, you would go to a hotel and then you would identify the leaders, like people that you think have the potential to be leaders. So they already had their own group and then most likely they're the ones that people really listen to. And then you would try [to] organize them and then they can organize their own people. And it just kind of spreads down.

Because relationship building was stressed in the union, Lea initially thought that it was important to try to meet everyone and connect with them. But she recalled that the union staff told her, "No, that's impossible. You can't really do that." Focusing on the efficiency of the model, Lea noted, "It's easier to meet that one person who is already a leader and organize them versus trying to go through everyone."

While this model may have been "efficient," there was a constant calculation of whether individual union members were worth the time and energy the staff put into them. Lea explained this more in depth: "A lot of the core work of organizing and building relationships [is]…trying to see…that spark, the leadership in someone so you can decide whether you should put in more time into that relationship versus other relationships." Lea clarified that once a relationship had been established, it was important to determine what motivated the person to be involved. She commented, "You don't want to ask the person to organize or be into the union because you want them to.

If they don't see…the benefits of them doing for themselves, then they won't be able to [organize]."

The valuation of different people based on leadership characteristics was strategic. College students, some of whom went on to work as interns for the union, were being trained to seize up hotel workers' potential for organizing. This calculated model of efficiency responded to the neoliberal context from which it was difficult to separate. As Tomlinson and Lipsitz (2013) point out, everyone is subjected to neoliberal messages that expect a particular response. Even amidst resistance to the interpellation, we all are impacted by neoliberalism's powerful reach. The union seemed to be using familiar discourses and understandings about leadership and networks for better working conditions. While creating a hierarchy in the evaluation of and investment in bodies and personality traits remained problematic, MOBILIZE! provided an example of how the characteristics of an ideal citizen could be used in service of a different purpose.

A more complicated aspect about MOBILIZE! was that even though it wanted its members and service learners to challenge capitalist social relations, it still relied upon the coupled forces of capitalism and colonialism through the tourist economy. Specifically, the union depended on the jobs that tourism created, yet the contemporary model of tourism strained the natural environment, increased the cost of housing, and commodified Hawaiian culture. It was impossible to tease apart these interconnected practices and the ways in which they generated interlocking harm. Like Cory mentioned, the union was not a perfect model for advancing social justice. But, it disrupted dominant systems in ways that other service learning sites did not.

One faculty member, Allie, described the complexity of the union. She shared that her feminist students sometimes "openly challenge the way in which [the union] operates." With a hint of pride, Allie continued:

> I think that that there have been some shifts as a result that kind of push back, especially in the trainings. I had one student a few years ago who was brilliant and very committed, a Filipina feminist, and she really challenged certain kinds of ways in which [the union] even approached organizing and sort of the valuation of self-interest or got to win and those sorts of models, you know, maybe there are certain kinds of masculinist roots to that.

In acknowledging that some of the union's practices were flawed, Allie encouraged her students to highlight these moments in order to show the complexity of efforts that aimed toward greater justice and to incite the union to think more critically about how it approached its work. In other words, in the process of subverting the construction of the neoliberal ideal citizen by collectively demanding better conditions for working-class people of color, there were still power dynamics that reinforced nefarious hierarchical systems like capitalism, masculinity, and colonialism. Further, union staff and university faculty members unwittingly created a different sort of hierarchy of bodies and knowledge, one that was predicated on factors like available time, charisma, and leadership. Allie was fine with the fact that service learners worked within an imperfect site, but this did not exempt it from critique. Rather, Allie believed that students' perspectives, when grounded in the combination of theory and experience, could be used to improve systems that structured people's lives.

CHAPTER SIX

Contested Terrain: Native Hawaiian Land Stewardship

[T]he classroom, historically, to marginalized peoples hasn't been the most friendly. In fact, [it] has been very violent…that history persists into today. –

Ben, Instructor

As noted in previous chapters, the terrain of service learning is contested. Just as the practice is commingled with efforts to assimilate disenfranchised brown and black bodies into white, middle and upper-class practices, there exist more radical efforts of societal transformation. For example, students have joined in solidarity with domestic care workers demanding better working conditions (Mitchell & Coll, 2017), committed acts of civil disobedience to raise awareness on issues ranging from gender inequity to genetically modified food (Miles, 2009), and conducted oral history projects with neighborhood residents to address topics like affordable housing and gentrification (Clark & Nugent, 2011).

This terrain of possibility and limitations is mirrored not only among the different types of service learning projects that abound but are actually embedded *within* the service learning activities that faculty ask their students to do. In this chapter, I illustrate what is modeled and taught through a Native Hawaiian land stewardship service learning project that sought to teach about two interrelated social justice concepts significant to the Hawaiian landscape and integral to the process of racial formation: colonization and decolonization. I end the chapter with questions faculty raised about the political nature of service learning.

The *Mālama ʻĀina* Program consisted of a complicated mix of forming citizen subjectivities. Some of the discourses and practices supported an idealized citizenship while others subverted it. This, in part, depended on which citizenship was employed. Due to colonization, citizenship is inherently conflictual. For instance, citizenship to a sovereign Hawaiian nation is typically conceived differently than—and is often in competition with—citizenship to the colonial United States. As such, enacting the former citizenship could be a way of subverting the later. This was often the case within the Native Hawaiian land stewardship project discussed in this chapter, although tacitly so. The tension between Native Hawaiian and U.S. citizenship was present yet remained very palatable.

Another important component of shaping citizen subjectivities was influenced by how the discourses were internalized and used by people—people who held various knowledges and who were differently positioned in relation to land and Native Hawaiian culture. What I mean by this is that within this program, Native Hawaiian students connected with their identity and culture in a deep way that was not similarly available to students with varying other ethnic backgrounds. And, while learning about one's own culture as well as "other" cultures is prized as one of the elements of ideal citizenship, enacting the values of Indigenous cultures that challenge anthropocentric understandings of nature (e.g., that humans have control over land, plants, and animals) and dominant notions of capitalism (e.g., private property ownership and competition) is not. Thus, the terrain of the ideal citizen is messy. Specifically, students were directed toward participating in the *Mālama ʻĀina* Program if they wanted to take part in Native Hawaiian restoration. The more political and very contentious work of protesting the

university-proposed construction of a powerful telescope on top of one of the sacred mountains (a 14th telescope on the same peak), which a few students were involved in, was not counted toward service learning hours. While instructors within the Ethnic Studies Department thought highly of the students who were protesting (thus, these students were ideal citizens within Native Hawaiian sovereignty efforts), the work of showing up at meetings, writing testimony, organizing other students to gather, and collectively make their voices heard, was (perhaps strategically) not included as one of the official service learning options. Nor were those hours in service to the Native Hawaiian community counted towards service learning requirements. The type of service that ideal citizens (of particular national bodies) did was political. In order to be officially recognized by the university, the service needed to remain within the confines of university interests. It was acceptable for service learners to tend Native Hawaiian cultural sites—land that had already been contested and was now cared for by nonprofits. But, for the purpose of service learning credit, it was not suitable to fight against the process of land dispossession, at least where the university was involved.

Mālama ʻĀina Program Overview

Mālama ʻāina can be translated as tending to or caring for the land. The *Mālama ʻĀina* Program (MAP) consisted of a range of sites wherein Native Hawaiian land and cultural practices were cultivated. Situated in lowland, midland, and upland locations within the *ahupuaʻa*—the traditional land division system that typically stretched from the mountains to the sea—the project taught about sustainable methods of land management and addressed the consequences of environmental degradation in Hawaiʻi. Professors within the university system who were well-respected advocates within the

Native Hawaiian community, including the director of the university service learning office, implemented the program over 20 years ago as a way for university students and local residents to "develop a sense and responsibility of place by creating a fund of knowledge and practical experience, including Native practices of sustainable living" (College of Social Sciences, n.d.). Or, as Kekoa, a third-year Native Hawaiian student described, "We were helping to restore natural resources or cultural resources and [were] learning about these places through culture and through place-specific knowledge."

Offered to students in service learning classes as well any members from the greater community, the participants at each MAP workday were quite diverse. There were students from all over the continental U.S., people who grew up in Hawai'i, and a smattering of international students, usually a group from Japan. Of those raised in Hawai'i, some had Native Hawaiian ancestry while others were Filipinx, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and a broad mixture of ethnic backgrounds. Some students were active in the military as they pursued their academics, some students were older, and others were traditional college age. The courses to which their service learning was linked ranged from Ethnic Studies and Nursing to Political Science and Botany. The variety of backgrounds from which people came added to the texture of the MAP.[9]

When service learners participated in MAP, they generally were instructed to work at a lowland, midland, and upland site so that they could better understand the functions of the different ecological zones of the *ahupua'a*. At each site, there were

[9] As mentioned previously, the participants in this study were all taking Ethnic Studies courses. However, at MAP workdays students from a variety of courses and institutions participated. The wide range of participants likely influenced how the opportunity was structured.

typically three components: *mo'olelo* (Native Hawaiian stories) and history about the site, manual labor, and sharing a meal. The physical labor ranged at each site: at the lowlands, participants helped restore the saltwater fish ponds (e.g., moved boulders to help build the rock wall; cleared mangroves); in the midlands, they tended the *lo'i kalo* (taro patch); in the uplands, they pulled weeds around *heiau* (sacred places) and planted native plants. In each of the locations, participants removed invasive species. And, in each of the places, participants typically got really dirty. As Malia described, "I was slowly sinking into the mud and my shoes were getting all dirty and like everybody was getting a mess."

Each workday also incorporated Native Hawaiian protocol, beginning with an Aloha Circle. This was an opportunity for the stewards of the site and the visitors to introduce themselves to one another and to the land. Participants were asked to share their name, where they were from, and an ancestor they wanted to bring with them while they worked. The site stewards often shared an *oli* (Native Hawaiian chant) associated with the site or region and welcomed the visitors to enter. Before leaving the Aloha Circle, the participants also chanted an *oli* that they learned during the orientation to MAP. The chant asked for knowledge and wisdom to be granted unto them. After the tasks for the day were explained, participants split into groups and worked on the projects. At some point during the workday, either right before or after the manual labor, the stewards gave a tour of the site so that participants would have a better understanding of why they were asked to do certain projects. Additionally, the stewards shared Hawaiian mythology associated with the site, and ideally provided more contemporary history of the land. Before lunch, participants gathered in a circle again,

and a MAP coordinator led a *pule* (prayer) to show appreciation for the land, the people, and the food. The workday ended with a shared meal.

One of the overarching goals of the program and of each of the sites was to facilitate "a connection between people and place." Holokai, a Native Hawaiian site coordinator of a midland site explained, "We grow all of this food and we eat the food of course, and we give…the food to the people who come to work with us. But we just use the food too as a way to connect people to place." This connection was illustrated through MAP participants' reflections on their experience—they learned about and grew in their appreciation for land and culture. Further, within that learning, participants gained insight into the historical and contemporary machinations of colonization.

In the discourses used and interactions that took place, service learners were hailed into subjectivities of caring for (or taking responsibility for) the land, for Hawaiian culture, and for the removal of invasive species. Each of these responsibilities aimed toward a form of decolonization, yet they were complicated. They did radical work and simultaneously had some mixed consequences when they operated in simplistic metaphors that did not consider the complexity of contexts, including the labor involved to facilitate these opportunities and the political omissions required to make succinct demarcations about de/colonization.

Connecting to Hawaiian Culture

One of the ways that the *Mālama ʻĀina* Program's sites simultaneously fostered a racial project and attempted decolonization was through learning about Hawaiian culture. Collectively tending the land through Native Hawaiian centuries' old practices, students heard *moʻolelo*, connected with Hawaiian culture, and in the process, learned

about environmental sustainability. As Trinidad (2012, 2014) posits, these practices are important ways to indigenize learning, particularly for Native Hawaiian students.

One of the key themes that students talked and wrote about was the idea of getting to know place and culture on a deeper level. Most of the participants in this study grew up in Hawai‘i but were not familiar with many of MAP sites. Or, they had visited the sites when they were younger but did not know the history of the site. Michaela, a first-year student, referred to MAP sites as “hidden gems” on the island that offered students a “rich history.” Kekoa, a Native Hawaiian student, expressed that he grew up in Hawai‘i but never knew about some of the sites that were “right behind all the tourist attractions” until they were pointed out to him. MAP gave him the opportunity to “get out into the ‘āina” (land) and out of his “comfort zone” since he was not familiar with the different places. He noted, “It's great to…hear all these stories and to see all the different places, get exposed to them.”

Exposure was not all the sites offered. Keith, a first-year student, expressed that as students, they were able to “learn more about the values, foods, plants and history [of] the [Hawaiian] culture.” The connection to culture was a point he specifically emphasized, noting that MAP sites provided a way to “understand and appreciate the Hawaiian culture, my culture.” He disclosed that prior to MAP, he did not know who to ask about his culture or where to go to find out more information.

Keith was not alone in his feelings of cultural illiteracy. Jared, another first-year student who also identified as Native Hawaiian, shared,

> I am a man who never truly got to experience the ways of his ancestors…Having the ability to somewhat get a feel for what my relatives did made me understand

> a[nd] better believe in who I am as a person. It's definitely something I am not proud about, but throughout this service learning journey I was able to experience and learn about my culture more than I have previously been able to within the past 19 years of living.

Participating in MAP helped Jared connect with ancestral practices and relate to his ethnic identity differently than he had in prior life experiences. This was powerful. Through MAP, Jared was presented with a picture of Hawaiian identity that varied drastically from his lived experience as a Hawaiian. MAP portrayed Hawaiian identity with more value and pride than dominant stereotypes, which tended to be a complicated mix of tourist-based notions (e.g., friendly aloha, hula, and surfing) and negative local stereotypes (e.g., lazy and not intelligent). The respect MAP gave Hawaiians opened a space for Jared to "better believe" in himself. Impressed by the amount of physical labor his ancestors did without modern technology, Jared exclaimed, "Our ancestors were badasses." By mirroring his ancestors' land care practices, he was able to feel a connection to them and the land. Of course, some of the work, such as clearing mangroves, could be more easily done with an excavator. However, as one site coordinator explained, if they did that, there would not be a need for people to come to workdays, and then people would lose the opportunity to connect with place and with one another. Thus, toiling with the land and working together were all integral to producing a cultural identity that emphasized Hawaiian values and practices in a particular place. These traditional customs were not routinely present in most participants' daily lives.

Sharing *mo'olelo* also facilitated a connection to Native Hawaiian identity for some students. The stories were told in an effort to link people with specific places and practices across time in the hope that they would take action, in part, because maintaining Hawaiian identity was political. Many Native Hawaiian students shared that learning about culture, as well as the stories of their ancestors who were integral to that culture, was an important way for them to deepen their self-identity. Momi, a student who lived near the fishpond where she spent many of her workdays noted that she was motivated to work there because it helped her to "know my knowledge, know my history, know like this place, know what I'm doing it for." The space offered her affirming messages about her Native Hawaiian identity, which she welcomed since she mentioned that Native Hawaiian people have been on the lower end of social status.

Kekoa explained that cultivating Native Hawaiian traditional land practices and stories were a way of "bringing back that culture…[and] that place." This was particularly important since colonization endangered Native Hawaiians as well as their language, stories, place, and practices. Kekoa further commented that he did not want these things to be lost because "culture, it informs who you are and then that language, you need that language to build your culture and support your culture."

Students who did not identify as Native Hawaiian also grew in their appreciation of Native Hawaiian culture. Malia, a student raised in Hawai'i, noted of MAP participants, "[E]ven though we're from different backgrounds, we're all supporting people who want to try to rebuild their identity….It's nice to help them grow again."

And, while initially a little brash, Kristina, a second-year, white student who grew up on the U.S. continent, also gained a deeper respect of Hawaiian culture. She commented:

> I thought it was slightly weird, the amount of stories they told. Like they look at this rock that just happened to have [a] kind of shark-like look to it and [would] be like, "Oh this rock protects the valley." And I'm like, "Dude, it's a rock." But, so I mean, my west coast mind was like, it's a rock….And then you listen to them tell stories and…why it has meaning to them. And it's like, "Oh, okay."…Nobody had ever explained why they thought like that to me until [MAP]. So they kind of, they're helping me understand the Hawaiian culture….I may not agree with some things. But at least now I get it and so I can respect other people's cultures and opinions.

The focus on respect for culture designated MAP as a racial project wherein the representation of Native Hawaiian identity was supported. In addition to valuing culture, non-Native students appreciated the opportunity to access cultural sites. Kimiko, an international student who planned to study Native Hawaiian law and eventually work for Native Hawaiian land rights, explained:

> It's really important to me to be able to stay in [MAP] as well because of the fact that there's always different opportunities coming up. And, for me, there's places that I won't be able to go because I'm not part of the native rights movement. I am more so Japanese. So for me to be able to see a lot of these different things, it's really important to me.

Kimiko realized that her participation in MAP provided access to culture, space, and practitioners that she otherwise would not have been afforded. While this was a form of knowledge extraction that Kimiko planned to use for her career, she hoped that it would be for the greater good of Native Hawaiians. With fairly vast knowledge, she cited case after case of how corporations and the state were cheating Native Hawaiians out of land and water. When she visited MAP sites, she made a point to talk with the site coordinators to find out more about the current land battles. She appreciated that MAP connected participants with the history and *mo'olelo* of specific places.

By focusing on Native Hawaiian cultural sites and practices, MAP was inherently a racial project that prioritized and appreciated racial representation and distribution of land. As highlighted in students' comments, Native Hawaiian students connected to the cultural sites differently than students who did not identify as Native Hawaiian. While Native and non-Native students alike learned about, gained access to, and supported Native Hawaiian culture, those who claimed Native Hawaiian ancestry also deepened their own sense of self. Specifically, this racial project afforded Native Hawaiian students the ability to connect with their ancestors and shape their identity with positive messages. The formation of racial identity gave Native Hawaiian students a sense of pride in their ethnic lineage. For non-Native students, this racial project offered additional ways of understanding how and why Native Hawaiians claim connection and sovereignty to this particular land. These efforts could also be described as a method of decolonization.

Working with Land and One Another

A second way MAP sites offered a decolonizing practice that influenced racial formation was by reorienting people's relationships with one another and with the land. Dozens of college students who did not know one another worked together early on weekend mornings to tend the land. Admittedly, in small conversations as participants signed in prior to the opening Aloha Circle, students recounted how many service learning hours they had already completed and how many more they still had left to go. But, as the morning went on, their conversations often changed from tracking time to the specific assignment at hand. As they pulled weeds from the *lo'i kalo*, moved tree branches, cleared mangroves, harvested *kalo*, and removed invasive algae, they began to work with the earth's elements and people in ways that required attention to how they related. They had to rely on one another, utilizing each other's strengths to accomplish the tasks set before them. For instance, in order to clear a branch pile or collect boulders to outline a new rock wall, a line of people formed to pass objects from one person to the next. Sweaty arms brushed up against one another and fingers interlocked to move the branches and boulders along. In the midst of being in conversation with those around them and joking about how this was a good workout for the day, participants asked for help if a boulder was too heavy and offered support to those next to them in the process.

At a lowland site, participants were asked to haul five-gallon buckets of small rocks as well as large boulders from the shore, across a three feet deep body of water, to the rock wall that outlined the fishpond. Some male participants showed off their muscles by carrying the boulders individually, but most people worked in pairs or triads to get the boulders across. This required reaching down into the water, finding a spot on

the rock where their hands could be placed to get some leverage, and then lifting the rock and letting it fall on its opposite side. They would do the same thing again and again until they reached the rock wall. Once participants made it to the rock wall, they would hoist the boulder together and place it atop the wall. Sometimes they congratulated one another with a high-five. "We did it!" These were small, yet important ways that participants attended to their relationships with one another as they accomplished tasks together. Teamwork was definitely required.

Reorienting relationships to land, participants were put in the position to care for the *ʻāina*. The connection to land was much more intimate than daily interactions of traversing it by car or bus to arrive at an intended destination. At midland sites, students' feet sank in the mud as they stomped in old leaves that would decompose and add nutrients back to the *loʻi* before a new batch of *kalo* was planted. And, to harvest *kalo*, students bent over, calf-deep in the mud of the *loʻi*, and used their fingers to loosen the roots of the underground stem, or corm. Once the corm was released, participants carefully eased the clumped, wet soil from the roots so that it could return to the *loʻi*. Taking time to be intimate with the soil, having it ooze between their fingers and toes was something that most participants did not regularly do. April joked, "I have dirt in my fingernails. It's gonna stay there for a week." Realizing that this work was not routine for most participants, one of the land stewards noted, "What [the participants] may take back with them is they were in the mud where they're normally not supposed to be." But, he added, "working here with the land, with the plants, with the water, with the mud…they're learning and feeling a lot more from those experiences than what we could ever tell them in our stories."

In end-of-semester reflections, students focused on how MAP required them to attend to their relationships with one another and to land. This felt different than other teamwork efforts in school. Rebecca, a Native Hawaiian student, commented that she enjoyed "just loving the land" and the Hawaiian cultural practice of "working together as a family, whether if you're family or not… towards a common goal." Keith wrote, "In [MAP] everyone works together despite their differences in race and ethnicities." And Amy noted, "The work we did was labor; it was hard work which made working in a team of people all the more important. Everyone was helping each other, and everyone depended on each other." Amy felt a "sense of purpose" from participating in MAP. She shared:

> [I was] part of this bigger thing than myself, this community. And I got to see it on a really local, intimate scale. I know we have this global community, but it was just so nice to see it in front of me, like in a smaller scale, how we were all there for each other. The support, you just felt, first of all, you felt needed. And second of all you felt like you had that support. So it went both ways. Like you've got a sense of dependency and independency.

The focus on relationships with land and one another facilitated activities and feelings that intentionally subverted dominant messages of individualism, competition, and hierarchy. This, in a sense, was radical. On top of it, Native Hawaiian cultural practices and stories were passed along in an effort to restore the land and culture. In a location colonized for over a century, cultural and land restoration were profound.

Yet, the onus for this restoration was placed on individuals participating in service learning, with the hope that they would take this back to their own families and

neighborhoods to engage in similar efforts. The project maintained the incremental logic that by transforming individuals, societal change—or decolonization—would occur. This message was further reiterated at the closing reflection session at the end of the semester when one of the co-directors of the MAP said to the group gathered,

> Many of you suggest that we grow the program. While I appreciate and understand the place that comes from, rather than have a centralized approach, which is what has created the mess we're in now with the government…it is about locals in community. It's about people who live in communities who have the most knowledge of the situation. It can't be one size fits all. We need custom approaches…Take action in your community rather than looking to others to do it. You're creative and innovative. Take action and solve problems.

Even though Ke'alohi, a third-year, Native Hawaiian student, was not present during that closing reflection session, the message was consistent enough within MAP that it reverberated in her comments:

> If you're seeing more development in your community, if you know there's a lot of invasive species in your backyard or something like that, you know, what are you doing to prevent that from happening or what are you doing to get rid of it?...Are you letting it grow wild in the back or are you actually trying to trim it down and try[ing] to plant native?

Individual actors were supposed to take what they learned back to their own settings to make changes. Even though this was an important message, the collective work necessary to systematically repatriate land and life to Native Hawaiians outside of MAP workdays seemed tacit.

Removing Invasive Species

A third way students participated in a form of decolonization that further influenced the demarcations of race was through the physical process of removing "invasive species," which were a major concern at each site. Invasive species were described as "aggressive;" they took over and crowded out native plants, offering little space and possibility for the indigenous and endemic plants to survive. At each site, invasive species took on slightly different machinations, but the overall result was the same: they dominated native plants and processes, some of which were endangered.

Even though each site coordinator spoke extensively about invasive species, none of them explicitly linked invasive species to colonization as they talked with students at workdays. Neither was this connection made during class, despite class discussions that featured colonization. Wondering about the intentionality of the omission, I asked Holokai, one of the site coordinators, if invasive species was a metaphor for colonization. He chuckled and disclosed, "We think that exact thought." But, he noted that because people get "defensive" and because he was "purposely not trying to turn people off," he did not use the word "colonization." Rather, he took the approach of teaching people via a concrete action that they may find more acceptable—weeding. He responded that if invasive species is a metaphor for colonization,

> What do we do about it? And so…then we go to, well, by removing this invasive species, it's like we're in a way removing a piece of colonization from ourselves.…By weeding the loʻi, we're not just weeding the loʻi, like we're in a way removing things that we…maybe [do] not even know that's within ourselves that had been…put there….[B]y weeding the loʻi, we're kind of weeding our

> minds as well…We're learning about kalo and loʻi and water flow and all of that. But we're also learning about just being in the mud and doing these practices…They may think they're just weeding the loʻi, but there's so much more learning that's going on in the loʻi. We like to think about it in those terms of colonization and removing a small part of it.

Since MAP drew participants from a range of racial, ethnic, economic, geographic, and political backgrounds, focusing on weeding rather than decolonizing kept participants open to learning about the site. And in the process, the site coordinator avoided possible tensions between students who were in the military and those who advocated for a demilitarized, Native Hawaiian nation. He also expanded the metaphor beyond physical colonization of lands as he referred to the decolonization of minds and bodies that weeding tends. Some students picked up on this as they talked about the ability to de-stress when working with and appreciating the land that produced sustenance.

In written reflections, a few students reiterated examples of contemporary colonization that were mentioned in class and at workdays. While they did not specifically name the metaphor of removing invasive species, they identified how Indigenous land claims were sidelined for the purpose of "progress." They cited drilling an oil pipeline through Dakota territory, or more common, the building of an expressway through a sacred Hawaiian valley. Students had the opportunity to visit the sacred site underneath the expressway and hear about the contestations over land from the grandson of one of the women who protested the construction. Haʻa, a first-year, Native Hawaiian student, said of the expressway, "This modernization, or 'Americanization' of Hawaiʻi

happened at the expense of Hawaiian cultural sites." Equipped with this knowledge and newfound connection, Haʻa further shared, "This type of appreciation for the land could really change your entire mindset on how you view the land."

While mindsets were changing and critical consciousness was forming, students were not given much to *do* to collectively foster decolonization other than physically weed the land and metaphorically weed their minds. Addressing literal decolonization seemed muted. Rather than name "colonization," it was easier to talk about the metaphor of invasive species and how to remove them. In other words, Holokai taught about colonization through a language and an action he viewed as decolonizing: weeding the invasive species. The lesson went something like this: When different species not originally from an area were introduced and acted aggressively, they crowded out the species that were already there. The aggressive plants disturbed what was an already functioning ecosystem. When this overcrowding took place, the native species could become endangered, or even extinct. Thus, we needed to remove the invasive plants so that the native species would be better able to survive. In short, new species needed to get along and be respectful within their host ecosystem. If they were disruptive or aggressive, they were deemed dangerous and marked for removal.

The message about invasive species (whether people or plants) was tricky. If the invasive species symbolized the white, U.S. business and military colonizers, the racial and metaphorical formula was understandable within a decolonial framework: capitalist interests (e.g., tourism and militarism), and those who controlled them, needed to be uprooted. However, if the invasive species symbolized the generations of immigrants from various countries who came to Hawaiʻi to work in plantations that exploited their

labor, or the newer Micronesian immigrants who made their way to the Hawaiian Islands for health care as a result of the U.S. bombing their islands for nuclear testing prior to detonations in Japan, the metaphorical ramifications were more complex. The relations of power, the histories and conditions from which people came, and the treatment they experienced in the new ecosystem were critical to understanding how the non-natives acted within their new environment.

Even though the symbolic referent was left unnamed, Holokai shared with me the long-term political intentions of Native Hawaiian land restoration:

> [T]he foundation of all of these Mālama ʻĀina and Aloha ʻĀina groups and nonprofits is this idea that we're rebuilding the nation in a way through these different means of *huli ka lima i lalo*, turning your hand to the ground and doing the work. And yeah, not necessarily specifically saying it, but by just through this work…Aloha ʻĀina itself is very politically rooted. There's the political party…Aloha ʻĀina people were the people who were supportive of the queen and very much against the overthrow of the government….So yeah, I think the foundation for this Aloha ʻĀina group is growing the nation and speaking the truth.

Holokai articulated how MAP worked as a racial and national project; it was intended to teach people Hawaiian values and practices that were separate from the ethics of greed, theft, materialism, and individualism embodied in capitalist and colonial relations. Through processes of sharing, working together, and connecting with land, plants, and water, MAP coordinators desired to grow the Hawaiian nation with people who adhered to values and practices associated with Hawaiian culture.

While Hawaiian values were presented in a very acceptable way through MAP, in the broader island society, the political objective of "growing the nation" was contentious and meant different things to different people. For some, it rang of nationalist tendencies, a sort of nationalism from below (Kotouza, 2019) that could be just as exclusionary or domineering as U.S. practices of "democracy." For others, it meant long overdue self-determination for Native Hawaiians with a sovereign nation, and yet for others, "growing the nation" referenced constructing a demilitarized, sustainable, de-capitalized co-existence of all inhabitants on the islands, guided by Indigenous ancestral practices (Osorio, 2001). Each of these viewpoints were not mutually exclusive but carried different intonations about who should wield power and what processes and practices should govern life, land, and relationships. These various perspectives and their associated intricacies, however, did not get explicitly addressed within the MAP. They remained unnamed political intentions. As students participated in the expected growth of the Hawaiian nation, they had varying levels of comprehension about what that meant. In particular, they wrestled with how to treat "invasive species."

A first-year student, Mari, referenced a class wherein the guest lecturer was talking about the history of land dispossession in Hawai‘i. She said that people from the U.S. were given land and "then they take it and it grows…like an invasive plant." Talking in more detail about invasive plants, she noted that at one of the workdays, they learned about different invasive plants, including one that was referred to as "hale koa." Her Dad shared with her that is the same name of a military hotel in Waikīkī. Knowing the vast militarization on Hawai‘i, Mari wondered if the naming of the two had anything

to do with one another. (Interestingly, the common term for this invasive species is actually "haole koa" rather than "hale koa," which is indeed the name of the military hotel. "Haole" literally means foreign, but typically is used to refer to white people from the U.S. continent. "Hale" means house. Despite the confusion between "hale" and "haole," Mari's interpretation around the invasive nuisance of the plant and the military shared a similar meaning.)

In Mari's mind, the military was one form of invasive species, but she also referenced invasive animals. She mentioned that the mongoose and the coqui frogs were invasive, but she did not think it was right to kill them. They were just trying to live. Mari recalled that she and her Dad saw a mongoose laying in the road once and they stopped, got out of the car, and tried to scurry it back into the bushes so that it could hopefully continue to live. She said, "Even though they are seen as pests, they're still alive." She then compared invasive animals to plants, saying that they deserved to live as well. However, she reasoned that it was not quite as bad to remove invasive plants because they were "far more dangerous" than the animals that were invasive.

Mari was grappling with the far-reaching ramifications of what the concept of invasive species signified. Echoing what she had been exposed to during lectures in her service learning class, she did not mince words when it came to criticizing the military or the tourism industry, particularly noting the high level of pollution that came from military bases. But when it came to defining living creatures as invasive that needed to be removed or killed, Mari was much more hesitant.

I raised the symbolic meaning of invasive species with students during the last week of an upper-division course where the class spent much of the semester talking

about colonization and its ramifications. After a student's presentation on a MAP site wherein removal of invasive species was central to the project, I asked the class if invasive species was a metaphor for colonization. After making the suggestion, Kekoa, who in addition to participating in MAP was a student worker at the *lo'i* on campus, gasped and said in a low voice, "Oh, I hadn't thought of that. I like that." I followed with, "Is it that simple and straightforward, or is it more complicated than that?"

Another student took up my question. A couple of decades older than her classmates, she commented that even invasive species need to be used rather than just discarded; it's important to use the resources that we have available until we can rid ourselves of the invasive species. She offered the example that one of the invasive trees was often used to make canoes. Even though class time ended, preventing the class from engaging in a fuller conversation about the metaphor, just raising the notion seemed to offer students a way to complicate the symbolism and think deeper about the conditions that colonization has created.

In subsequent interviews, students were eager to think through the metaphor. Momi reiterated a conversation she had with a site coordinator for her final project. He shared with her that the invasive mangrove was "a representation of the history of the missionaries and the Westerners that came in from a long time ago." She extended this logic, reasoning, "Once we get rid of that…once we like move those things aside, our indigeneity and our Hawaiian traditional culture[e] will definitely take over and come back into place." Momi highlighted that the process of colonization (or was it colonizers? or both?) had been harmful, and much like invasive species, needed to be removed.

Kekoa was also interested in using the metaphor to think through colonization. He told me, “Invasive species are like colonizers.” He went on to explain, “Invasive species erase…the native species from the land.” He then distinguished colonialism from settler colonialism, which he described as “seek[ing] to push out the Indigenous on top of extracting…resources.” Kekoa spoke to the danger of having Indigenous peoples, practices, and resources eliminated through the processes of both colonialism and settler colonialism. However, Kekoa was careful to speak differently about people who came to Hawai‘i under unjust conditions. He thought of them as Indigenous plants that adjusted to life in Hawai‘i without trying to crowd out the endemic plants (those that can only be found in Hawai‘i). In the extension of the invasive species metaphor, Kekoa specifically referred to Micronesian immigrants. Distancing himself from the discriminatory comments he heard about Micronesians, Kekoa found a place for them in the metaphor that linked people to plants. He also complicated what literal decolonization might mean for Hawai‘i. He confided:

> That's the thing I struggle with too if you apply [invasive species] to people because…there's different perspectives.…So it's like, what do you do with the people?…I wouldn't want to just ship everyone off. Like I have friends that say, “Oh, I'll be like, I'll be part of the…customs department and so you can deport people.” And I'm just like why would you—that's not the way you should look at things. We should be able to integrate people that are willing to integrate with like our ideas of a sustainable future for Hawai‘i. Or like whatever we wish or seek to create. Like people should be able to participate in that willingly….You can’t just kick everyone out.

Kekoa and Momi produced different and complex understandings of invasive species as they thought about and constructed parameters around what Native Hawaiian sovereignty and literal decolonization would entail. Playing a bit more with the meaning of sovereignty, Kekoa called upon the wisdom of *kupuna* (elders), sharing:

> Sovereignty's already here. Sovereignty's not just like a policy created; sovereignty's in the land and you see it. Like we're revitalizing a lot of these places and we're restoring a lot of these cultural and natural resources and I think that's the beginning steps of sovereignty.…One of the first steps of sovereignty would be feeding the people.…When you can make yourselves free from depending on imports and feeding yourself, that's sovereignty right there in a sense too. Right? So it's the little sovereignties. It's not necessarily being our own independent nation.

Students were learning about and thinking through concepts that challenged how their relationships with one another and the land could be changed. Additionally, when the metaphor was made explicit, they delved into the possibilities and complications that literal decolonization entailed, including whether efforts of removing invasive species contributed towards a solution or it replicated the problem. Melanie, a marine biology major who spent much of her service learning hours removing invasive algae, explained how careful one had to be when removing algae because when little fragments broke off, they could root in another location, resulting in greater spread of the plant. She admitted,

> As I'm out there picking up all this algae, most of it is breaking off [and]…all these pieces are floating away. And I just think, "Well, is this even worth all of this because all those pieces are just gonna regrow again?"…I kind of felt like it

wasn't actually stopping what we were trying to do. It was kind of contributing to [i]t because we're regenerating them.

Melanie raised a question central to many service learning projects: were efforts really addressing the root of the issue, or was the problem actually spreading despite best intentions? She understood and valued the importance of bringing people together and educating them about the significance of the coral reef and the challenges that invasive algae can cause, but she also was concerned that the attempts to remove the invasive algae might be causing more harm than good. And she questioned whether these community work days were a feasible strategy to reducing algae growth long-term. She asked, "Are they just going to keep doing that for how long until something actually changes?" She wondered, "Instead of doing the same thing over and over and hoping for a change, maybe try something different to see if a different outcome would happen."

Conversations with students and site coordinators, and my own desire for explicitly naming power dynamics, left me pondering the various ways in which the metaphor of invasive species could function, the reasons for leaving its referent of colonization unnamed, and what questions these dynamics might raise for service learning. One interpretation was that by using decolonizing metaphors, such as learning about Hawaiian culture, working together, and removing invasive species, site stewards kept participants open to learning Native Hawaiian land and cultural practices. Making decolonization palatable created a greater likelihood that participants would remain engaged in the site. The practice of removing invasive species could also allow for people to take the knowledge and use it in spaces nearer to where they lived. Thus, leaving the metaphor unnamed provided the possibility of individual transformation

while averting friction with the university and other systems of power. It was safer to keep overt political messages out of the service learning project so as to avoid being associated with collective organizing for decolonization (and all the complexities that came with it).

On the other hand, neglecting to specify the metaphor could have missed opportunities to help students acknowledge the deep injustices of colonization and how it played out in contemporary spaces, including realizing the vast amount of work required to repair relationships, redistribute material resources, and restore cultural practices. Moreover, staying at the literal level of invasive species rather that providing space for metaphorical interpretations dismissed the possibility of thinking through additional systemic injustices embedded in the metaphor, such as the link between migration flows and intensified global capitalism or the politics of reproduction (both physical and social) of those viewed as nuisances to Native ecosystems. In other words, some students may have been left with simplistic messages about inclusion and exclusion in the unspoken complexities of how different species arrived, how they interacted with Indigenous systems, and the values and practices they held. Articulating these systemic issues could illuminate the need for sustained vigilance around Native Hawaiian cultural and land practices as well as the urgency for increased pressure on the state to care for the people it relied upon for economic and political dominance.

And yet, another interpretation could be that since communicating in metaphor is very common and intentional within Hawaiian language and practice, leaving the metaphorical referent unnamed served an important purpose. Arista (2010) explains that the *kaona* (hidden meaning) of a metaphor is meant for the "deserving, knowledgeable

listener" (p. 666). Silva (2004) explores this idea in detail by illustrating how Native Hawaiians used metaphor within public news sources at the end of the 19th century to communicate with one another messages of organized resistance against the overthrow of the monarchy. By communicating in metaphor, they were able to intentionally mask the oppositional information from colonizers. Thus, *kaona* can be used with the specific intent to exclude certain people from important messages. With this understanding, leaving the metaphorical referent of invasive species tacit allowed it to be accessible only to those who could internalize the meanings on deeper levels of symbolic and material life (Kauhunawaikaʻala Wright & Balutski, 2016). In this way, teaching Native Hawaiian stewardship practices could be seen as a subtle and patient, yet quite poignant way of "growing the nation." It was an act of resistance against continued colonization, especially if students dedicated to Hawaiian sovereignty allowed the message to penetrate their collective conscious.

In/visible Evasions

While incredible possibilities existed within MAP, as with other sites, there were challenging contradictions inherent to its functioning. Specifically, there existed practices within MAP that took place behind the scenes that were central to the reproduction of the project, and the reproduction of unexamined, undervalued labor. This happened on two fronts: prepping the site, and prepping the meal.

Prepping the site. To accommodate a number of volunteers, each site needed a certain amount of preparation. This varied per site. For instance, a site that had hired staff would make sure that a tree was cut down into manageable pieces so that the service learners could clear the space by carrying the wood into a burn pile. Or if they

wanted volunteers to assist with building a path on top of the rock wall outlining the fish pond, the staff ensured that there was a pile of small rocks that the students could scoop into five-gallon buckets and carry to the location where the rocks were needed. These tasks took advanced planning, but seemed fairly straightforward since this was a part of the site staff's paid job.

The preparation at a site with no paid staff was more complex. The site underneath the expressway that ran through a valley was cared for by an all-volunteer nonprofit board of community members, including a family member of one of the protestors when the expressway was built. Even though Native Hawaiians were supposed to have unfettered access to the site, the state's Department of Transportation maintained access to the road and the gate at the entrance of the site. Prior to the monthly workday, the service learning office staff would coordinate with both the community board and the Department of Transportation to make certain the gate would be unlocked upon arrival or that they had the latest code or key to unlock the gate. On more than one occasion, there was confusion about this—a lock had been changed by the Department of Transportation and the service learning office staff could not access the site. Since workdays were on Saturdays, it was next to impossible to contact the right person in Department of Transportation who could unlock the gate on a weekend. Additionally, if there had been significant rainfall, the mud on the roadway from land erosion would make the road impassable. The service learning office staff would have to ask the Department of Transportation to blade the mud from the road in order for people to be able to make it to the site. All of this took an extraordinary amount of communication and coordination.

Additionally, just to maintain this site, one of the volunteer community members typically asked service learners to contribute a donation to the site if they could afford to do so. The donation would go to helping care for the site by purchasing more work gloves or tools for future workdays. The request was yet another example of how caring for land and life was relegated to the private sphere; volunteers who tended the land were also asked to financially contribute to the maintenance of the site. While that was the only site where I witnessed such a request, the financial component raised a significant issue: the university relied upon the free labor of community partners to educate college students. None of the community partners received any financial remuneration for offering this experiential learning. The logic was that community partners received volunteer work in exchange for the education they provided. However, even top administrators within the university understood that community partners gave more than they received. Speaking of the university's community partners, one university administrator admitted:

> If you expect you're going to be able to put a person on a task and then they're going to give you the deliverables and outcomes you need by the timeline you need it, it may happen and it may not happen…. So our sponsors have to be flexible about it. So if we can find the right, the right ways for [the students] to be contributing, because they're learning, right? They're coming in and they're learning.

This comment revealed the dependence on people and organizations outside the university to do the work of educating students. Within the context of neoliberal

governmentality, this was one way that the university simultaneously outsourced labor, prepared students with skills for the job market, and structured social behavior.

Prepping the meal. One person, Dee, a faculty member and co-director of MAP, ensured that each workday closed with a shared meal. This entailed her shopping on a Friday night at a bulk store (e.g., Costco) to purchase enough food to feed anywhere from 20 to 120 participants. She then, with the help of her physically ailing husband, prepared the food either late into the night on Friday and/or early Saturday morning. With industrial sized pots, she cooked spaghetti with meat, chili, or pork and cabbage stew. The last two items were always accompanied with rice. For dessert, she made one or two large trays of brownies. A sizeable salad also was provided, especially for those who did not eat meat. Dee's student staff was grateful for her commitment and realized how hard she worked to make the meal happen. Wanting to contribute to this responsibility, they sometimes would assist by picking up a food item at the store to share with the volunteers.

Each weekend, sometimes twice, Dee purchased, prepped, and hauled the food in her small Prius to MAP sites. This may have been acceptable if it was the primary function of her job. However, it was not. These tasks were done by the same person who played a significant leadership role in coordinating service learning opportunities for the university. It was a mystery to her student workers whether she was actually reimbursed for all the money she spent on the food. What was more certain was that her time shopping and prepping the food was not compensated. Participants and site coordinators alike were very grateful to Dee for providing the food, yet the reliance on unpaid, gendered, and reproductive labor practices remained unaddressed. Dee mentioned to me

that she could possibly make things easier on herself by asking everyone to bring a dish, so it would be potluck style. But, she refrained from doing this because she felt it was important for participants to experience the Hawaiian value of being fed if they helped tend the land. Placing emphasis on this Hawaiian value romanticized culture while ignoring the labor involved in feeding people. Moreover, with the reproductive labor of primarily one woman for hundreds of volunteers, the university was able to boast a 20-year continuation of MAP and thus close connections to Native Hawaiian people and cultural sites. The university used this cultural capital in its attempts to position itself as an Indigenous-serving institution, and possibly to make up for its prior and contemporary colonial efforts, including the proposal to build another telescope on a mountaintop.

Being Political

The work of being noticeably political creates tension and takes energy. The compounded messages of MAP echoed service learning's contested genealogies. The evasions addressed above were contradicted by the radical possibilities within the racial project that restored cultural and land traditions. Metaphor could be a powerful, if palatable, way to teach about de/colonization. By getting their hands dirty working the land, students were provided opportunities to decolonize their minds, their relationships with one another, and their relationship to the earth. Plus, as alluded to in Ben's quote that opened the chapter, MAP provided "hands-on" project-based learning, which, he suggested was "a component of higher education that may have been left out historically." He noted that for marginalized students, this form of experiential education was "a lot easier to comprehend" than traditional classroom spaces, which often have

been "very violent." Making Native Hawaiian cultural practices a featured component to credit-bearing, collegiate-level learning in spaces outside the walls of conventional classrooms could be, in and of itself, revolutionary.

Further, tending the *ʻāina* and sharing *moʻolelo* may have conveyed significant messages about Hawaiian collectivity to (at least some) participants in a profound way. By breaking everyday patterns and altering how people interacted with one another and land, MAP demonstrated a type of intimacy and collectivity required in social movements and interdependent relations not found within capitalism. Practicing different forms of relations could hold powerful possibilities, even if not immediately evident.

Simultaneously, it is important to ask if leaving complicated power dynamics unnamed may have left students with over-simplified messages about Native Hawaiian advocacy and decolonizing work—the work of being racialized and nationalized. One instructor, Chad, spoke to the "uneven" experiences that students had at different MAP sites. He critiqued that in addition to the basic history and *moʻolelo* of the places, he would like to see more discussion of the social, political, and economic forces that contributed to things like building the expressway through a sacred Hawaiian valley or existing threats to water in certain areas. He suggested, "As opposed to [saying] there's some offensive stuff [that] happened here…[explain] these things are happening because of these other forces." Wanting the "what more is happening there" to be made clear to students, he stated, "There is always more." He continued in a pedagogical tone, "So how does the experience at the site help you to understand that context, and therefore

reach some kind of analysis and conclusions about, well what do we need to do about that?"

Chad indicated that specifying the realities would have a better chance at inspiring people to advocate for different conditions. Without making explicit connections, the more radical lessons embedded within the program were minimized. There was no explicit call to literal decolonization—the "repatriation of land and life" to Native Hawaiians (Tuck & Yang, 2012, p. 1). Nor were there overt invitations to be collectively involved in contemporary land battles that could return land to Native Hawaiians—or at the very least challenge the concept of private property ownership. Despite current land contests at some sites, no information was provided for contacting the neighborhood planning board or the Department of Land and Natural Resources about supporting the work of these sites or taking a stance on particular development plans. Not on site, nor in service learning classrooms were there specific connections made between the metaphor of invasive species and the complex realities of contemporary migration, the unjust systems that encourage it, or the discrimination that marginalized people face as they immigrate. And while mentions were made in classes about how people were protesting the construction of the university-sponsored telescope, there was no information provided about how to be involved. Nor was there the opportunity for students to incorporate their participation in that struggle into their service learning requirement. Similar to the charity and justice tensions embedded within service learning, there seemed to be tensions between various processes of decolonization. The decolonial practices encouraged by instructors and site coordinators seemed to center individual transformation. Land restoration definitely happened, but

what was explicitly prioritized was having individuals connect with and appreciate the land rather than organizing, advocating, and literally decolonizing.

Even though a few students probed the complexities and implications of colonization in their final reflections, most students reiterated the more palatable messages they heard and experienced on site, such as the importance of working together to accomplish tasks, the need for environmental sustainability, and the significance of Hawaiian cultural practices. In my analytic memo for MAP's closing reflection session at the end of the semester I wrote:

The concept of teamwork is one that is stressed through [MAP]….But, the concept of teamwork doesn't seem to be oriented to making sure that pesticides are banned. There was no mention of the bill that went through the state legislature this week about better regulating agri-businesses' use of harmful pesticides near neighborhoods and schools. Even though political undercurrents are implied in the messages of this program (about Native Hawaiian sovereignty, culturally and politically), there are no overt messages about it. It's an "all work together; we're all a part of the human race" approach. I wonder what this covers up. Does it cover up Hawaiian nationalism? Does it cover up whiteness—as in not confronting capitalism with a political orientation that would encourage students to rise up and protest? Are changing land practices one patch by one patch going to be strong enough to combat the forceful systems of capitalism and corporate practices? (Analytic Memo April, 28, 2018)

From my interpretation, at issue was how overtly political the service learning project was willing and able to be.

Faculty in the study realized that the different service learning opportunities offered inconsistent engagement with critical political perspectives (e.g., union's critique of capitalism versus the *Mālama ʻĀina* Program referencing past land struggles but omitting current ones). Further, instructors acknowledged that the service work required in some settings had a more dubious affect than others (e.g., paternalism within tutoring versus collectively demanding better working conditions).[10] As is common in university service learning programs, there were multiple justifications for keeping the sites that served the status quo. First, the partnerships had been in place for many years. Simply discarding the university's long-term relationships with the organizations and the people within them would be unethical. Second, in order to place all the students who were required to engage in service learning, the less critical sites were needed. The second problem was somewhat circular. The more university departments utilized service learning, the more placements were needed. And, in order to have enough placements, the service learning office (seemingly) could not be as picky in determining sites. A critique among some of the faculty was that there were not enough placements engaged in societal transformation. Daniel noted:

[10] There were additional service learning projects that also took place in the course of my research, including preparing senior citizens for the U.S. citizenship test and assisting at a homeless shelter. While I collected data on these sites and the service learners in them, I did not write about them in the dissertation, primarily because the data lined up similarly to the Bright Horizons Tutoring program. In other words, these service learning projects closely matched the server/served binary common within many charity-based efforts, and therefore did not provide any meaningful contrast. While the data could be used to further a simplistic critique of service learning, my hope was to capture the contours of different service learning projects, and how projects with varying intentions and designs do some of the same work of generating—and resisting—hierarchies.

> What [the students are] doing is basically working with programs that are, I won't call them band-aid programs, but programs which don't advance the cause of a transformative society. And it would be wonderful having them working in places where people are actually working for social change, to support resistance against the existing power structure and whatever else. And that's a hard one. It's a hard one because that might conjure up some of the enemies...people who would see a very politicized department. And the other thing is it's just difficult to find them. It's much easier to work in a homeless shelter.

Daniel cited the dearth of societally transformative opportunities available as a reason for maintaining fairly traditional sites. Conveniently, the increase in the number of nonprofits that universities could partner with coincided with the solidification of neoliberalism and the rise in service learning. The logistics of needing placements made programs like Bright Horizons Tutoring and MAP attractive since both programs could take almost as many students as wanted to volunteer. MOBILIZE!, on the other hand, did not have the same capacity, likely because they spent significant time teaching and crafting learning experiences for students. Almost as a precondition, the sites that could take the most service learners provided the least critical perspectives. When sites simply required bodies to complete basic tasks, there was not always the same attention to providing an explanation on the social conditions that necessitated the labor.

Ironically, considering the large number of service learners involved with Bright Horizons Tutoring and MAP, there were definitely possibilities of socially transformative work that could be facilitated. However, there was a problem of scale. Increasing the size of a project makes it difficult to maintain emphasis on quality and

critical learning. But there was an additional variable to this puzzle—the fear of being seen as too political. In the case of Bright Horizons Tutoring, rather than fully describe the social forces that led to the emergence of the site, which might have the effect of sparking the agitation required for change, issues of inequities in education and treatment of immigrants were delivered through familiar messages that mirrored historical missionary narratives (e.g., younger immigrant students in a low-income area needed assistance from people outside of the neighborhood to help them assimilate into U.S., white, middle-class normed behaviors of schooling and college-going). Even within MAP, the issue of Native Hawaiian land restoration was presented in a way that tacitly challenged white supremacy and colonization. Yes, land was being restored via workdays, but there was more emphasis on individual transformation than collective demands about land rights and land usage.

Being too political for the university's standard was the second problem Daniel mentioned. While activist groups might not be as organized, well-funded, or numerous as nonprofits, they existed and could provide possible partnerships for experiential learning. However, the fear of being targeted for being overtly political was a serious concern, especially since departments that have a history of community engagement, like Ethnic Studies, also have had shaky relations within university settings since their founding. In addition to persistently looming funding cuts and department mergers, academic disciplines that were born of struggle have been challenged for scholarship not academic enough, politics not neutral enough, and pedagogies not rigorous enough (Aoudé, 1999; Das Gupta, 2016). These may be some of the underlying reasons why service learning instructors create more politically palatable projects and stay with the

individual transformation objective of building empathy. Educating individual ideal citizens to "make a difference" is much safer within neoliberal institutions than building collectives that demand radically different structures. Simpson (2014) speaks to this, arguing that service learning's lack of being overtly political has "increase[d] the possibilities of integration into mainstream academic frameworks" (p. 90). Conveniently, the process of developing ideal citizens allows universities to perform doublespeak: they tout the respected characteristics of ideal citizenship (e.g., teamwork, compromise, volunteering, creative entrepreneurship, reflection, etc.) but quietly hope that students and faculty do not become so political that they jeopardize funding streams from the government, corporate-backed grants, or wealthy donors. If a service learning project goes awry and they do generate such focus, the university has to figure out a way either to discipline the subjects and their efforts[11] or commodify their bodies enough for the university to profit.[12] In other words, the display of explicit politics is used to

[11] A relevant example, but is not a central part of the current study, is the university's proposed administrative rules that manage and enforce "Public and Commercial Activities on Mauna Kea Lands." These rules were designed to control access and operation at the site of the proposed telescope atop what Native Hawaiians consider a sacred mountain. While these rules ostensibly create the possibility of transparency and institutional / commercial responsibility, they also were designed to govern parameters of access and acceptable public behavior. Thus, these rules gave the university the right to have Native Hawaiian activity (which may include protests) disciplined by law enforcement (Hawai'i Administrative Rules).

[12] An example of racial capitalism connected to the example in the above footnote is that NASA, which was involved with and would benefit from the construction of the telescope, also offered the university funding to support the education of underrepresented engineering students. The university boasted offering financial support to students of color even though that same "support" could further disenfranchise students of color from Indigenous land claims (UH News, 2019).

increase the management and discipline of bodies and/or use them for racial capitalism (Leong, 2013). As Ethnic Studies' instructors wrestled with how to position their service learning practices, they realized that being more political would likely mean that they would experience greater policing from the university and its funders, and that such exposure could drastically change the financial support for the university, the department, and the pedagogy. Thus, communicating through *kaona* may be required for collective action to be promoted from the auspices of official university projects.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Service Learning: Racial Projects For and Against Ideal Citizenry

Each of the service learning sites detailed in this study paired well with the curricular content of the Ethnic Studies Department, which examined race and ethnicity, particularly with social justice in mind. As such, the service learning opportunities easily could be seen as another "text" of sorts (Varlotta, 1996, p. 27). As with all curricula, this "text" was shaped, in part, by the context in which it was created. Renderings of white supremacy, capitalism, and colonialism were inescapable. Even though much of this unjust triptych in the U.S. context has been perpetuated through the beliefs and actions of white people, even people of color can embody and enact the values associated with these systems (Smith, 2006). In the case of service learning, just because the racial/ethnic background of participants in Hawai‘i was drastically different from many colleges and universities on the U.S. continent, this did not mean that the power dynamics automatically shifted. Due to the ways that dominant society socializes its members, the stratification and exploitive factors of unjust systems are enacted through bodies of color in ways that can be damaging—perhaps in different ways than when they are performed by white bodies.

Fortunately, the "text" was also influenced by the stories and practices of communities who have (imperfect, yet noteworthy) histories of fighting against hierarchical valuations of bodies, knowledge, beliefs, and behaviors. And many of those struggles included people from a vast range of racial and economic backgrounds fighting in solidarity with one another. As mentioned previously, the dynamics of identities and how they were carried out could be extremely complex. Who was in what role

(university, community organization, community member, site coordinator, instructor, student) and the politics they enacted not only shaped the experiences of those around them but also influenced the discourses and interactions of the racial projects. Additionally, what community projects students were asked to engage in and how their participation was framed was instrumental in students' learning as well as any change that may have occurred. Thus, each service learning site as "text" offered different possibilities of and limitations to social change efforts. Detailing the contours of each service learning project reveals the how the processes behind the pedagogy were involved with racial formation. These processes also did the contradictory work of supporting and resisting neoliberal constructions of ideal citizenship.

Bright Horizons Tutoring

Bright Horizons Tutoring was an after-school program for elementary and middle school students wherein college students offered tutoring and facilitated activities. With a specific focus on educating low-income immigrant children in dominant knowledge systems, this educational program most closely mimicked colonial and missionary efforts to construct racialized, ideal citizens for the nation and the economy. The college students were positioned as responsible, young adults who helped with homework, held the expected knowledge of basic English reading and math, and pursued college education for their chosen careers. Their bodies and behaviors were framed as models to imitate. Additionally, their bodies and material possessions were to be protected (e.g., they received instructions on where to park and how to keep their possessions safe in the neighborhood). The arrangement situated the college students as ideal citizens and the younger students as those who lived amidst deficiency—the

neighborhood was “unfortunate” and “dangerous;” the students’ families did not have the preferred knowledge or skills for helping their children with homework; and the families did not have accepted ways of interacting with their children (e.g., families’ forms of affection for children was questioned, and they could not provide the material resources for adequate food, clothing, and hygiene). As the elementary and middle school students were “rowdy” but “loving,” they were framed as needing assistance from people outside of the community in order to get on the path of ideal citizenship—the path that would lead them to college and possibly out of the neighborhood.

Akin to missionary education efforts, discourses about and interactions within Bright Horizons Tutoring worked to assimilate low-income immigrant children of color into acceptable forms of knowledge and behavior. Dominant race and class-based rhetoric (including those from site supervisors and faculty) about low-income immigrant neighborhoods influenced service learners’ interactions and imaginations about the neighborhood, particularly curiosities about what the younger children experienced at home. Despite the children’s happiness at school and in after-school programs, service learners imagined the children’s home lives to be negative. Puzzled by this incongruence, the service learners justified the children’s excitement and joy in school and after-school spaces by reasoning that the younger students were “making the most of it” and were grateful to be in the safe and nurturing space of school-related environments. Of course, another way to interpret the children’s happiness was that they were extremely well taken care of at home, but that the interconnected systems of education, housing, food, health care, employment, and immigration were not up to par in order to provide suitable material resources for families in the community.

This racial project worked to shape both the service learners and the young children. Engaging in service learning in the Valley neighborhood implicitly reinforced to college students that their bodies, their knowledge, and their college going behaviors were valued more than those who lived in subsidized housing, did not have college degrees, and had jobs that earned low wages. A message about remaining in college was tacitly in the background as college students compared the differences between their home environments and those of the Valley Housing community. This racial project allowed service learners to slightly alter circumstances for younger individuals as they learned about stratified social conditions, but did not offer any clear opportunities to join with others to imagine and create different conditions. Instead, service learners were exposed to—and mostly followed—the rhetoric of faculty and site coordinators who reiterated dominant stereotypes about low-income immigrant neighborhoods.

The younger children and their families were also racialized through this project. As people who had immigrated from Micronesia, they were encouraged by Bright Horizons Tutoring to learn English and assimilate into norms of U.S. formal education. As mentioned in one example, their language and knowledge were underappreciated so much that young students were told that they were not supposed to communicate with one another in their primary language in the classroom.

Even though there were moderate disruptions to the dominant rhetoric and interactions (which further illuminated the typically unspoken awkwardness of the missionary-style project), the overarching frame of Bright Horizons Tutoring reveals how exposure to the "other" was intended to build college students' empathy while encouraging younger students to conform to behaviors associated with upward mobility.

The college students were supposed to assist the younger students in getting on the "right track," which would lead them out of subsidized housing. Otherwise, the younger students would be "trapped" in the same conditions as their families and neighbors. When a service learning arrangement begins with authority figures situating bodies, knowledge, and behavior into hierarchies, it is really difficult for students (at any level) to envision or enact different realities.

While interactions with young children from underresourced backgrounds can build college students' empathy and expose them to educational inequities, it should not be surprising that service learning placements with dynamics similar to Bright Horizons Tutoring also reinforce the underlying mores rooted in colonial and missionary efforts: certain people need to be educated and civilized by those who are valued in society. This setup continues the mutually constitutive forces of democracy and domination. Specifically, as more people are included into the democratic enterprise through formal education efforts, their inclusion serves a twin purpose: 1) extracting labor for 2) gaining national ascendance. The logic continues that those who fall outside the parameters of ideal citizens of democracy have done so voluntarily. In the context of the U.S., valuing specific bodies, knowledge, beliefs, and behaviors over others constructs a labor force to accumulate capital that is then used for national domination.

MOBILIZE!

MOBILIZE! was an organizing labor union that strongly advocated for better working conditions. Within this service learning project, college students received lessons on basic concepts of how capitalism works as well as joined in solidarity with workers as they made demands from employers and lobbied the legislature to regulate an

industry that negatively impacted affordable housing options. Service learning with MOBILIZE! also worked as a racial project, despite its racial displays being subtler. Somewhat similar to Bright Horizons Tutoring, this racial project attempted to bolster people of color's social circumstances. But, while Bright Horizons Tutoring strove to improve life conditions for immigrants of color by educating them into U.S. white, middle-class norms, MOBILIZE! was not interested in completely acquiescing to predetermined standards that they did not have an equal role in deciding. Aiming this racial project in a different direction, for different purposes, union members—most of whom identified as immigrant women of color—positioned themselves as powerful agents who collectively defined their interests and advocated for them. The racializing aspect of this project blended with class interests. Union members were working-class people of color who labored in an industry that took care of people who could afford to fly to the islands for a vacation. Union members made the beds, emptied the trash, cleaned the bathrooms, did the laundry, and served meals to predominately white and Japanese tourists. However, it was not the tourists that the union members directed their ire against. Rather they fought the imperial, corporate behemoths that exploited their labor.

Service learners were invited into this process as learners and workers who enacted solidarity with union members. The discourses relayed to service learners about union members were not ones of damage or deficit as was the case with Bright Horizons Tutoring. Instead, union members were advocates, workers, learners, and organizers. Their bodies and knowledge were valued. Yes, they were learning additional skills determined appropriate for participating in democracy, like how to give testimony to the

legislature, but they were also learning how to confront their bosses, an art that is not as prized within neoliberal ideal citizenship. MOBILIZE! dissuaded college students away from hegemonic characteristics of ideal citizenship that privileged individualism and competition by encouraging them to collectively challenge authority and capitalism. Echoing the strong historical examples of their predecessors' union tactics, MOBILIZE! members and college students worked together to resist oppressive work arrangements. They attended meetings, participated in protests, and wrote testimony for legislation that would significantly impact the city's working-class residents. One student even took the confidence and organizing skills she developed with the union and started using them on campus.

This service learning project offered an activist orientation that disrupted commonsense notions of charity by organizing and advocating for better working conditions. At the same time, it is important to acknowledge that in order for the union to operate, it could not completely separate from the foundations of white supremacy, capitalism, and colonialism. Despite individual critiques of the military and tourism economy, the union staff and its members realized their dependence upon this intertwined economic structure for survival. Without this economy, the workers would not have these jobs. This, of course, did not mean that different jobs—ones that did not continue to support militarism and the dispossession of Native Hawaiian land—could not be created, but that was not what MOBILIZE! demanded. They were not calling for the oppressive systems be dismantled. Rather, their argument was that corporate enterprises made huge profits, so they could definitely afford to increase wages and implement systems for increased worker safety. In other words, MOBILIZE! called for

slight changes within the existing structure. And yet, given the power of corporate giants, this disruption in the system was notable.

Additionally, in the attempt to subvert stratification employed by corporate interests, union staff created a different hierarchy. Similar to neoliberal efforts (albeit for different ends), union staff stressed efficiency within relationships and spent more time and energy cultivating leadership skills in college students and union members they saw as having the potential to help the union advance its goals. As Tomlinson and Lipsitz (2013) caution, the hegemonic rhetoric of neoliberalism hails us all; there is no easy way to operate outside its reach. The discourses and practices of neoliberal ideal citizenship were difficult to completely dislodge. In some ways, the methods MOBILIZE! used were teaching college students to collectively challenge oppression. In other ways, due to the predominant economic context in which we all operate, MOBILIZE! still prioritized particular leadership characteristics and efficiency frameworks in order to achieve their goals. There was an urgency that warranted a strategic response—one that was just as clever as the tools that shaped the need.

Partnering with a union for service learning was tricky. Labor unions are historically known for excluding the interests of some of their members (particularly women and people of color). Given the reality that residual elements of unjust processes show up, sometimes in ways least expected, the union had to be thoughtful in their actions. It was not outside the bounds of possibility that some members' concerns were not being addressed by the union. However, there was promise in the fact that historically marginalized people, their stories, and their interests led the union. Those who fell outside MOBILIZE!'s interests or orientations were still welcome to

participate, but theoretically, they had to use similar methods of organizing in order for their concerns to be taken into consideration by the larger membership.

The complicated contours of the union illustrate that there are no perfect arrangements for educators who are interested in organizing for or demanding more socially just conditions. However, there are partnership possibilities that have frameworks aimed toward disrupting harmful hegemonic discourses and practices rather than solidifying them.

Mālama ʻĀina Program

The third site, the *Mālama ʻĀina* Program (MAP), was quite complex in regards to the rhetoric and interactions that occurred. MAP was an environmental stewardship project that restored Native Hawaiian culture through land practices, stories, relationship building. As a service learning project that also served as a racial and national project of representation, land distribution, and Native Hawaiian cultural practice, MAP offered Native Hawaiian students the opportunity to deepen their self-identity and provided all students a chance to grow their appreciation for Hawaiian places and culture. The racial project was pointed toward valuing Native Hawaiian customs and reclaiming the land that had been taken from them. As a national project, Native Hawaiian practitioners were intent on "growing the nation" through teaching Hawaiian values and practices. But, it was not only Native Hawaiians who they taught. Anyone, from any background, was welcome to participate in workdays. The Native Hawaiian practitioners told participants that once they had worked the land, they were now a part of it; they were connected to the long genealogy of people who came before them and also worked the land. Native Hawaiian students, due to their heritage, may have felt more connected to

and learned more from the sites than other students; however, site coordinators were poised to teach and offer opportunities to all who were present. These were entry level projects that anyone was welcome to attend, partly because a goal was spreading awareness about and appreciation for Native Hawaiian culture. It also did not hurt that the sites could benefit from a large number of people's manual labor.

At the various sites, stewards shared *mo'olelo*, used discourses of teamwork, sustainability, and cultural appreciation, and warned the dangers of invasive species. By engaging service learners in Native Hawaiian culture, land practices, and the literal removal of invasive plants, site coordinators also encouraged students to reorient their relationships with culture, one another, and the land. Service learners experienced the extensive amount of work that could happen through teamwork, were exposed to values of reciprocity, and introduced to the concept of not taking more resources than needed. These were powerful efforts that disrupted values embedded in white supremacy, capitalism, and colonialism. With MAP, college students were asked to imagine, and begin to construct, a society based on Native Hawaiian land and water practices. This strategy was incremental, yet literally built a Hawai'i with different physical features. Fishponds and *heiau* were restored and *lo'i kalo* were planted and tended.

At the same time, the palatable reliance on the metaphor of invasive species and avoidance of articulating the more contested rhetoric of decolonization, rematriation, and indigenization, may have left certain political possibilities of this racial and national project muted. For instance, leaving the metaphor unnamed made it difficult to stimulate complex understandings of colonization and immigration. Acceptable messages about sustainability, land, and water glossed over the ways in which these issues have been

contested—both historically and presently. Rhetoric of sustainability did little to make explicit how politics around land and water were intricately linked to structures that systemically determined how resources were distributed and utilized. Whether the college students explicitly learned about the power dynamics of those structures largely depended on the academic course they were taking. While the physical labor performed altered land and water, pleasant images and discourses about intercultural teamwork and sustainability were not going to make the university stop and change its role in constructing another telescope on sacred land, nor was it going to force the state's private electric company to use more renewable energy rather than import large quantities of oil, natural gas, and coal. Instead, these feel-good messages were easy to co-opt for the benefit of powerful institutions. In fact, one of the site visits I attended had over 100 volunteers from the private electric company helping to remove invasive species so that the site could create more *lo'i kalo*. Coincidentally, there was also a film crew on site that day documenting the volunteer work. As racial capitalism lurked in the backdrop, university or company efforts toward social, cultural, and/or environmental justice did not mean that they could not simultaneously undermine those very efforts (Leong, 2013). Once again, the seemingly contradictory practices of democracy and domination appeared as mutually constitutive.

And yet, the work of MAP may have offered *kaona* for those knowledgeable enough to receive it. If the metaphors embedded in language can work on many levels, it may be that while the literal removal of invasive species was taking place, Native Hawaiian students were also able to deepen their sense of self, enabling them to join in solidarity for sovereignty under the right conditions.

On the one hand, keeping the historical land practices of Native Hawaiian culture palatable for all participants aligned nicely with ideal citizenship under neoliberalism. The goal for civically responsible citizens in this racial and national project was to participate actively in communities and learn about various cultures but not agitate or demand different arrangements from the state, such as land re-distribution, the abolition of private property, or demilitarization. Additionally, this project operated within the frame of neoliberal capitalism by modeling the unnamed and undervalued labor required to provide these hands-on opportunities. The university, which was supported by the government (decreasingly so) as well as corporate, foundation, and individual funds (increasingly so), relied on nonprofit and volunteer staff to provide educational experiences outside the physical setting of the university. Because the university staff who coordinated service learning opportunities—particularly Dee and her student workers—supported the work of MAP (more than any other site), were devoted to providing valuable experiences to college students, and wanted to keep this project and the relationships it required going week after week, they labored above and beyond the duties of typical jobs. The feminized work of caretaking (e.g., providing food and maintaining relationships) was exploited by the university. The university profited from the preservation of strong relationships with Native Hawaiian community partners. Institutional resources (staffing and student volunteers) were distributed to this racial project, but in a way that its overseers could tolerate. Amidst tensions with those in opposition to the construction of another university-sponsored telescope, the institution had the luxury of positive relationships with Native Hawaiians through the continuance

of MAP. In other words, the university could perform doublespeak as it simultaneously respected and desecrated Native Hawaiian land and values.

On the other hand, the hidden messages within MAP could be seen as consistently, collectively, and methodically instilling Hawaiian values and cultural practices that would be useful when most needed—when Native Hawaiians were pushed far enough to rise up together in resistance to state powers. While there were consistent, small instances of resistance, a larger example catalyzed in July 2019 with the collective resistance against the university's construction of the Thirty Meter Telescope on top of Mauna a Wākea. With disciplined behavior, self-governance, and the guidance of *kapu aloha* (e.g., specific rules around acting with respect and love for one another and the earth), Native Hawaiians and their allies questioned past colonization and significantly slowed and altered continued colonization. The educational efforts of *mālama ʻāina* projects over the prior decades played a significant role in Hawaiians and non-Hawaiians alike learning about Native Hawaiian culture, values, and practices (Goodyear-Kaʻopua, 2013). This cultural knowledge and appreciation have, without a doubt, contributed to the collective protection of the *ʻāina*.

Managing and Tracking Bodies and Behaviors

In addition to the way that bodies were hailed into characteristics of ideal citizenship, thereby shaping behaviors for the nation, information on these bodies and behaviors was tracked. The service learning office staff had an incredible amount of data to manage as they matched students with placements, tracked the number of volunteers and their service hours, maintained liability waivers, and kept records of all this for internal and external queries (including national service learning recognitions). In any

given semester, there were hundreds of students participating in service learning, all from various courses throughout the university, typically with an hour requirement ranging from 15-25 hours. While managing and documenting all the moving parts was logistic (e.g., community organizations needed to know how many students they needed to accommodate), it had substantial political ramifications. In the current study, this data was managed through spreadsheets. While students could sign-up for their service learning projects online, all of the data was manually checked and matched against sign-in sheets at sites and the signed time logs that students provided at the end of the semester. The process was cumbersome. Because of this, a university administrator was looking into purchasing a computer software program that would be implemented university-wide. The software would offer basic data management but also was intended to "measure the impact of service and volunteerism in the community" (Give Pulse, n.d.). Incidentally, the company that provided the software assisted businesses, nonprofits, cities and municipalities, and higher education in understanding and capturing their "impact" so they could provide the information to their stakeholders.

The software could match students with volunteer interests, log their service hours, upload their service reflections, measure student learning outcomes, as well as create and maintain Memorandums of Understanding with community partners. Additionally, because students could create a profile that lasted beyond graduation, the university could potentially track alumni community engagement. Those responsible for tracking the data for the university were very interested in the data management side of the software. However, Dee, raised two concerns. One issue was that the software would automatically match students with organizations based on the students' interests. Instead

of allowing students direct access to sites, Dee liked to have a vetting process in order to protect both the students and the organizations. She shared, "We have people who won't pass the background check for certain sites. That's very traumatic for them to go through." Dee's concern pointed to one of the exclusions inherent to service learning programs: civic engagement offices have to regulate which bodies have access to which spaces and to which "other" bodies. In order for college students to volunteer in schools, they have to clear a criminal background check. This of course reinforces dominant narratives about who universities and after-school programs consider appropriate for children to interact with and emulate.

The other apprehension Dee had was what would be done with the data. She worried that if the university paid for the software, administrators would also be the ones who would control the data and determine what activities were considered civic engagement. As the software was designed to work across the institution, it would be coordinated with other university software that tracked which courses students took, their grades, and their financial assistance and tuition payments. The software representative encouraged that this would allow students to easily apply for service awards and organize their student club involvement. In short, this was a way for bodies to be evaluated for ideal citizenship as well as calculated for value by the number of hours they volunteered. (Important to remember is that playing with younger siblings, helping one's own children with their homework, or protesting the construction of a university-sponsored telescope on Native Hawaiian land did not count as service learning specifically, or civic engagement broadly.)

It is not a large leap to make from tracking such information to realizing how a system like this could be used as a means of increased surveillance of service learners. This data would not simply be collected for a course, rather, it could follow a person well beyond their collegiate experience, continuing to document and evaluate their participation in acceptable forms of democracy. In short, this tracking makes it more difficult to lose the trail of association with, or rejection of, ideal citizenship. Considering the way that increased monitoring of people's unideal behaviors have made it more difficult for people to obtain jobs and housing (e.g., people with criminal backgrounds), service learning scholars and practitioners should remain suspect of the political ramifications of tracking ideal bodies and behaviors.

Developing "Better Citizens"

Each of the service learning sites were racial projects that supported and/or resisted ideal citizenship. Amidst the different projects, there was an underlying tension between how much focus should be placed on individual transformation versus societal transformation—and which service learning sites offered how much of which type of transformation. At a base level, by having students engage in service learning, instructors placed significance on a pedagogy that was ideologically linked to learning via experiences (Dewey, 2004) and problem posing education (Freire, 2002). Individual transformation was definitely expected. By incorporating service learning into their pedagogy, instructors implicitly acknowledged that learning about society took more than simply lecturing students about how it was unjustly structured. Additionally, becoming an agent of social change took practice. Encouraging the practice part, the

service learning office partnered with community sites that offered beneficial lessons in the training to become thoughtful, caring, and active citizens within society.

Yet each service learning site varied in their approach to individual and societal transformation. Bright Horizons Tutoring largely repeated current dynamics of individual change. Through an assimilative model, the project hoped for incremental change via service learners who could use the empathy they learned and employ it in future encounters. MOBILIZE! insisted on different societal conditions via advocacy and confrontation, and they assumed that individual transformation would take place through this process. The union taught service learners that while change took time and often several attempts, their demands were pressing. Meanwhile, MAP used cultural traditions to teach a different way of orienting oneself to the world and to one another. Engaging in Native Hawaiian customs in and of itself was a way of practicing individual transformation. MAP's coordinators desired societal transformation but their approach was incremental.

As mentioned in chapter four, a straightforward way that Dee thought about service learning was "getting better citizens by putting students out there." I want to examine this comment in greater detail. In my experience working in and researching service learning for over a decade, the sentiment of this discourse is quite common among service learning faculty, both in and beyond this study (and thus, should not solely be attributed to Dee). This rhetoric serves as a prime example for highlighting some of the dominant assumptions about people, belonging, and place embedded in service learning. First, "better" assumes a comparison group that is worse. Second, "citizens" draws parameters about who belongs and is granted rights within certain

places. And "out there" speculates that where students already are (or come from) is not enough for them to encounter and understand the power dynamics of social relations exposed within service learning courses.

In the case of the three prior chapters, the "out there" spaces were an after-school program, a labor union, and Native Hawaiian cultural sites. For some service learners in this study, pieces of the environments where they engaged were at least partly familiar; for other students, the environments were completely new. Regardless, all service learners were introduced to different ideas and experiences by simply working with people in organizations with purposes to "improve education and quality of life" for Valley Housing residents (PPP Factsheet, 2019), organize for better working conditions, and "take responsibility and action to preserve and improve" the environment (College of Social Sciences, n.d.). The organizational objectives of the sites seemingly were geared toward social justice. Of course, it might not be optimal that college students who were not already part of the communities or particular organizations assisted in the efforts, but interacting with people outside their social circles was meaningful. Society is designed to keep people segregated, so structuring opportunities for interaction across different social circles is not inherently bad. Thus, the language of "out there" was not problematic by itself. However, when "out there" was associated with the concept of "getting better citizens," the comment became more complex. What did "better citizens" mean and how was the process of arriving at it framed?

Examining the processes of each site made clear that "getting better citizens" was difficult to separate from the construction of "ideal citizens." Embedded assumptions about what "better" or "ideal" entail created a troubling hierarchy of

valuation. Within neoliberalism, many characteristics of the ideal citizen, as described in chapter two, are worthwhile in and of themselves. Ideal citizens are reflective, they care about others enough to volunteer and be involved in their community, they make wise choices, are culturally literate, and so on. However, the traits are vexing in a number of ways. First, when these attributes are constructed as "better," or ideal, it is easy to dismiss how certain people (e.g., white, educated, able-bodied, middle-class) experience more privilege within social institutions, and thus are better positioned to achieve the ideal traits than most people, especially within the context of service learning. The ability to participate in college service learning programs is fairly exclusionary to start. Students first have to access college. This study included a service learning course that was part of a college access program for underrepresented students. The fact it was a pilot program funded by a federal grant rather than an integral part of university practice spoke to the exclusionary nature of college education for minoritized students in the state. Additionally, for many students, carving out time to volunteer outside of additional school, family, and work commitments was a huge challenge, especially in a location where the cost of living was so high. The student who left home at 4:30am to beat traffic on the way to class worked 15-20 hours per week in addition to being a full-time student with a science lab.

Connected to how some students experience more privilege within social institutions, and thus have easier access to the characteristics of ideal citizenship, formulating an ideal creates a homogenizing and assimilative tendency. There is an assumption that everyone should strive for this ideal. This formation automatically

demotes those who cannot (by means of ability, access, ascribed label, etc.)—or do not want to—achieve this ideal to a lower social rung.

A second problem with ideal citizenship is that it positions people to be acquiescent to—and even work toward—"commonsense" ideas rooted in capitalism. Examples of these commonsense notions include, but are not limited to the following: every social institution (including education) must either make money or cost very little; people must sell their labor to have basic necessities met; individuals deserve the amount of money they make (as opposed to realizing that society values different jobs differently); formal education is the best way to learn skills for meaningful and financially stable employment; competition is required in every facet of life; and taxes should be low so that people can make their own decisions about how to spend the wealth that they generate or inherit. These hegemonic ideas scrub the imagination of believing that institutional structures can be designed to work for everyone within the population.

Hegemonic, hierarchical, exploitative presumptions also are embedded within service learning. Often unquestioned, these notions pass as ideals within neoliberal citizenship. But as the present study highlights, these processes are rife with stratified logics. The following is a small list of assumptions that operated as commonplace within the three service learning projects:

- Privileging the U.S., white, middle-class knowledge embedded in formal education over the multiple knowledges and languages of immigrant communities

- Utilizing untrained college students to teach dominant curriculum to younger children who attended underresourced public schools
- Assuming that a partnership with the university would increase children's educational achievement
- Attending (protectively) to the bodies and belongings of service learners more than younger learners
- Using marginalized people for the purpose of college students' self-discovery, empathy building, and overall knowledge extraction
- Outsourcing the responsibility of university instruction to community members who make little to no money, thereby exploiting their time and expertise
- Expecting that service learners would be given meaningful duties and not menial tasks
- Evaluating people based on their perceived ability to lead and garner more support
- Undervaluing yet heavily relying upon the feminized labor of relationship building and feeding
- Positioning service learning as job preparation

Each of the above processes are laden with power, and the university, its faculty, and its students were positioned as those with more power within dominant society. These practices toward ideal citizenship went mostly unmentioned by administrators, instructors, students, and site coordinators.

The third problem of ideal citizenship is that the creation of such citizens allows the state, which is supposed to operate for the public's good, to continue to shirk its prime responsibility. Supported by service learning efforts, ideal citizens have been trained to take up the responsibilities of caring for basic human needs, not only through volunteering but also by being entrepreneurial and creating innovative avenues for social services (e.g., mobile showering units for homeless people). It is admirable—and increasingly necessary—to care for those within our midst. In fact, a common perspective of service learners was that more people should participate in service learning so that additional social services or land restoration practices could be provided. Interestingly, but perhaps not surprisingly, rather than interrogate why their actions were necessary, service learners focused on creating more of the model that was provided to them by instructors and site coordinators.

The focus on individuals volunteering (if they had the time, interest, and proper connections) took attention away from interrogating why the state significantly underfunded public education, had loose guidelines for corporate entities associated with tourism, and continued misusing and desecrating Native Hawaiian lands. Of course, it is crucial to note that the state has never done an adequate job of providing basic necessities for people, especially low-income people of color. However, relying on individuals to embody civic responsibility to meet the population's needs potentially leaves even more room for discrimination as well as accidental omissions of minoritized people as personal perceptions of the majority determine who is considered deserving of resources. People on the social margins perpetually are excluded when they must depend on the good graces of individuals with power. I contend that the possibility of creating

systems that provide these resources for all people exist, but they require a collective will to imagine and implement them. This leads to a fourth problem of ideal citizenship.

Ideal citizenship locates problems and possibilities within individual behaviors rather than factoring in how social institutions structure individuals' lives. This happens in two directions—looking outwardly at others' behaviors and reflectively at one's own behaviors. Regardless the direction of the gaze, the surveillance in both directions has similar disciplining effects. With an outward surveillance, certain people (often, those with college degrees) monitor others' behaviors to ensure the actions fit within acceptable social norms. The logic of such outward surveillance is that people who are poor, "deviant," and/or who experience discrimination simply need to make better choices that will lead to better life circumstances. Rather than acknowledge how social systems shape people's conditions and behaviors, blame is placed on individuals for creating the situations they are in. Further, many social service organizations are designed to "help" individuals make decisions with the intent of a better life, like getting a formal education to secure a living wage job; determining how many children to have based on family income; or being entrepreneurial and enticing enough for a wealthy benefactor to take interest in them. The logic of placing responsibility on individuals does not account for how social institutions (e.g., governments, corporations, schools, housing, health care) shape and limit the choices that individuals make or the life chances they have.

Emphasis on individual behaviors also happens in the reflective direction. Ideal citizens have been taught that their individual actions can "make a difference" in the world. So, they focus on their personal thoughts and behaviors, hoping that enough self-

discipline will generate needed change. Taught to recognize social disparities and the role that they have personally played within these inequities (e.g., understand their power and privilege), ideal citizens who have engaged in service learning try to act civic-mindedly. For instance, they are incited to do things like vote, make financial contributions to nonprofit organizations, and get involved in neighborhood boards, as well as change their individual perceptions to not be racist, classist, sexist, nationalist, and so on. They also may choose to grow their own *kalo* as a means of cultural and environmental sustainability. These are all desirable traits worth supporting. But what is missed in this process of individual transformation is the emphasis on the collective work required to make societal transformation. When dominant rhetoric—everywhere from education and jobs to media and religion—is so focused on individual self-improvement, the possibilities of imperfectly joining together to demand different political, economic, and social conditions are ignored. In other words, people police themselves and others for purity politics (as if there can be such a thing) rather than inviting people to find common spaces of dissent and resistance, like rallying against the major culprits of capitalism and colonization—corporations and the military. In sum, when ideal citizenship is tethered to neoliberal economics and ideology, bodies are (e)valuated, required to make money, and disciplined (both by themselves and others).

To the credit of each service learning site in the current study, students were not required to have a particular politics to engage in the work of the organization. Each site remained open to students and hoped that exposure to the site's work would positively influence service learners' perceptions about various groups of people and the social conditions they experienced. And yet the racial projects were engaged in the seemingly

conflicting work of advancing neoliberal governmentality, challenging capitalism, and emphasizing individual transformation. How the project was designed, the objectives of the community sites, and the opportunities instructors provided for the students to critically think through the complexities of social structures all played a role in students' experiences as well as whether and how hierarchies of race, class, and nation were reinforced and/or dismantled. Part of the difficulty of service learning within a neoliberal capitalist context is that the economic and ideological system can withstand the contradictions inherent to its structure (Joseph, 2014).

CHAPTER EIGHT

Acknowledging the Twin Purposes of Service Learning: Democracy and Domination

Given the history of missionary and philanthropic practices that connect educating for citizenship to white supremacy, capitalism, and colonialism, I ask in this dissertation how contemporary invocations of civic engagement, and its common pedagogy of service learning, reinforce and subvert these damaging hierarchies that contribute to the mutually constitutive processes of democracy and domination. While much service learning scholarship focuses on learning outcomes, scholars have argued that service learning needs to attend to the power dynamics embedded in the practice (Mitchell, Donahue, & Young-Law, 2012; Peterson, 2009). As such, I have shifted focus in this study to attend to the internal and seemingly contradictory processes that take shape within the practice. By zooming in on the discourses and interactions that are used, and their interplay with material and nonmaterial realities, we can gain a fuller understanding of how power operates within social contexts to form a hierarchy of ideal citizenship—and how such formations are resisted and/or rearticulated.

Through an examination of the discourses and social interactions that occur within three very different service learning sites, I have argued that service learning is a racial project (Omi & Winant, 2015) that both constructs and challenges the construction of ideal citizens for the state. I detail how service learning, even the kind that attempts to center social justice, works to create hierarchies of valued bodies and knowledge as college students are called into neoliberal subjectivities of individual transformation and civic responsibility, both of which benefit accelerated state control. Having asserted that

education has been employed for the intertwined purposes of increased participation and oppression, I find it imperative to interrogate how contemporary efforts of educating for citizenship bolster, resist, and alter these formations.

I primarily show that whether and how the practice of service learning supports or subverts the formation of racialized ideal citizens largely depends on how the process is framed by the institutions and people in authority who create the opportunity (e.g., universities, nonprofits, instructors, and site coordinators). This assemblage is critical to how service learners are positioned, and thus what information and perspectives they reiterate. Dominant messages about helping people who have experienced oppressive relations can reinforce a social and moral hierarchy of bodies, values, behaviors, and knowledges. Ironically, in the examples provided, even when the service learning experiences were framed in a way that attempted to counter hegemonic relations (e.g., MOBILIZE!), a new hierarchy was articulated—albeit for more socially just ends. At other times, the resistances to dominant forms of social relations like colonialism were geared toward individual transformation that (hopefully) would result in societal change at some later date (e.g., the *Mālama ʻĀina* Program). What is key to remember is that individual transformation and reflexivity remain a function of the neoliberal development of ideal citizens. As people become more aware of social disparities, they can better monitor and discipline their own and one another's behavior. It seems far easier to possess a locus of control at the micro-level of individual behaviors (of ourselves and those close and visible to us) than it does to shape macro-level social structures and permit everyone to operate within them according to their own skill, ability, interest, and need. Accordingly, suspending the logic and practice of placing

differentiated value on people as well as their knowledge, beliefs and behaviors is difficult to achieve without *collective* struggles against the systems and practices that created the hierarchies in the first place. By design, a palatable focus on self-development encourages people to surveil themselves and one another. In the process, it distances people from each other so that they have a more difficult time recognizing and building momentum around collective interests and struggles.

In what follows, I offer insights as to why even critical service learning struggles to meet social justice aims. I contend that the pedagogy participates in the mutually constitutive processes of democracy and domination as it works to shape and surveil ideal citizens for the nation. Acknowledging and wrestling with the reliance on hierarchies of valuation may help educators form alternative, yet imperfect coalitions that disrupt unjust systems.

Questioning Opportunities for Collective Action

Despite aforementioned concerns about being too political, some type of community engagement was imperative to the learning that took place within Ethnic Studies. The department was aligned with African American, Asian American, Chicano, Latinx, Hawaiian, and Native American founders of Ethnic Studies who called for universities to expand admissions, incorporate different content and forms of knowledge in the curricula, and engage with people who were pushed to social margins (Umemoto, 1989). But, what this meant and how it looked could vary from course to course and site to site.

Within the context of the current study, instructors within Ethnic Studies wanted to collectively think through and discuss how they used service learning in their classes

and what they viewed as the primary purposes of engagement. The idea for a critical service learning reading group emerged, and a date was set for a beginning conversation. Since my scholarship deals with critical service learning, I was asked to provide some articles for the group to review in preparation for the meeting. Through prior one-on-one conversations, I had deduced that faculty wrestled with the different orientations of the service learning sites and what types of changes the sites were poised to make. So, for this initial gathering, I suggested Mitchell's (2008) "Traditional vs. Critical Service Learning: Engaging the Literature to Differentiate Two Models" and Butin's (2015) "Dreaming of Justice: Critical Service Learning and the Need to Wake Up." Only four instructors were able to attend on the Friday afternoon of the first meeting, but the discussion was rich. During the meeting, Dee gestured to me to get the conversation started since I was the one who offered the readings. I gave an overview of how scholars have written about traditional service learning and critical service learning. As the discussion evolved, I posed my own thoughts about the tension between individual and societal transformation that I had heard in instructors' comments.

I shared that we live in a world that has taught people that they can "make a difference" on an individual level, but we know that most social change has happened because people have joined together, collectively using their power to make changes. While we want students to know they can be agents of change, it is important to work with others—to work in collectives—rather than thinking that if enough sole individuals change their practices, structural adjustments will occur. I noted that individual action tends not to challenge systems, rather, it works to change individual behaviors.

Chad, an instructor sitting to my left, agreed. "There is a pedagogical cost" of putting students in service learning sites where individual transformation is expected rather than collective struggle. He asserted that even though individuals can be transformed in an ethical sense, that is limited in regards to offering any social transformation. Chad asked the other faculty members, "How do we develop new partnerships that would allow for collective work?" Daniel replied, "We create those situations where we become the catalyst for change, which is what happened with housing in the 70s." In response, Dee asked, "Are we starting a movement, or are we about education?" (Field note April, 20, 2018)

Dee's question articulated a political struggle at the crux of critical service learning. How much should service learning merely teach about the root causes of injustice and how much should it emphasize (or attempt) societal change? These two notions are often blended into the concept of praxis (theory + practice), but with little attention to how praxis actually happens. Drawing on pedagogues such as Dewey and Freire, service learning scholars and practitioners have reasoned that experiential exposure to "others" in combination with an analysis of the origins of social injustice and an examination of power, including students' own social location within these dynamics, would facilitate individual consciousness raising and spark students' interests in becoming change agents (Cipolle, 2010; Mitchell, 2008; Porfilio & Hickman, 2011; Stanton, Giles, & Cruz, 1999).

Gaining a better understanding of power and the foundations of social issues is emphasized, but attempting societal change is a step that is taken with a bit more hesitation—and for good reason. This is, in part, because social change can be

overwhelmingly complicated, takes time, and requires extensive relationship building. Additionally, most scholars are trained to be teachers and researchers, not community activists. Similar to missionary efforts, university-community partnerships are filled with examples of academics entering various communities assuming that they have the knowledge and resources to solve problems without taking into consideration local knowledge and practices and without creating meaningful relationships with assorted community groups (Dempsey, 2010; Stoecker, 2016) Moreover, partnerships between universities and community-based nonprofits are more often designed to offer resources to underfunded neighborhoods (e.g., similar to charity or project-based models) than dismantle the structures that exploit labor and inadequately distribute resources and recognition in the first place (Dempsey, 2010; Kivel, 2007; Stoecker, 2016). Thus, faculty pursuits to facilitate opportunities for students to engage in social change can be mis-directed and irresponsible if not done with great care.

That being said, if a primary goal of service learning is to teach individuals the root causes of social injustice but not attempt structural change, an important question is why use service learning at all? There are less exploitive ways to teach and learn about the root causes of white supremacy, capitalism, and colonialism. And, there are more creative ways for students to build empathy and examine power. Explaining how experiential learning has relied on Enlightenment theories of an individual, innocent learner while hoping for rational and socially accepted forms of knowledge, Michelson (1999) contends that experience has become classified as a "form of private property that the individual owns, trades, and manages" thereby becoming a part of the "social relations of capitalism" (Experience and the unitary self section, para. 4). She further

asserts, “To the degree that a market society has organised, not only production, but personal relationships, patterns of consumption, and the mass-production of desire, the management of experience has become a way of regulating how people define themselves and construct an identity” (Michelson, 1999, Experience and the unitary self section, para. 4). Michelson’s critique about experience being constructed as private property raises a challenge for service learning: Is service learning merely a way to provide exposure to difference and injustice, thereby allowing individual college students to extract knowledge from devalued bodies and epistemologies so that students can construct their own privileged identity, develop intercultural skills, and acquire the credentials to become optimal candidates for managing behaviors and social relations? Within a neoliberal context, it is difficult to separate individual transformation from these objectives.

However, Daniel, one of the instructors, thought that service learning was inherently subversive, and thus, it was part of the process of social change. In an interview, he shared:

> [Service learning] basically, it challenges the whole notion of individualism as the core value in the society for any human being. And also the accumulation of wealth, and property and power as the virtues that one needs to pursue in life. So it’s profoundly, it’s profoundly unAmerican. I mean, the fact that it exists at all, that we’re able to—and I think maybe in the back of our minds…there’s the sense that in doing what we’re doing, we’re always subversive of persistent power structures and existing institutions and even more importantly, existing

consciousness. And that this [i]s a threat to people who control the university, who fund it and whatever else.

Daniel's hopes and desires for service learning seemed much more revolutionary than most of the processes within the practice. His theory was grounded in the initial protests that faculty and students held with community activists in the 1970s as opposed to most of the contemporary opportunities for service learning. Unveiling his radical intentions, Daniel believed that service learning focused on the well-being of others, which countered dominant American values of individualism and wealth accumulation. This was an interesting point. There is value in reorienting people away from self-obsessed concerns and toward an ethic of care for others. Yet, what if the dynamics of service learning, at least as an exercise of transforming individual service learners based on an exposure to and an analysis of injustice, *is* profoundly American rather than unAmerican? That is, what if service learning forms a social and moral hierarchy of bodies, values, behaviors, and knowledge as the state aims to hail students into becoming the societal caretakers of (those considered to be) immoral subjects and problem solvers of illegitimate or unprofitable dynamics? This might seem antithetical on the surface, but it is not so far-fetched when we recall the missionaries' good intentions to civilize entire societies. Stated another way, the dynamics within service learning can replicate the mutually constitutive processes of democracy and domination.

Activism?

An alternative to service learning and the dynamics embedded within is activism. Rather than service learning, perhaps scholars and practitioners should be opening opportunities for students to join with people who have been marginalized in collective

demands for different systems—systems that do not create social and moral hierarchies and the accompanied service experiences that these hierarchies require.

Kekoa, a third-year Native Hawaiian student spoke to the challenge of the university creating opportunities for activism. In classes and lectures, he heard many inspirational stories about students and faculty protesting housing evictions and advocating for the founding of the Ethnic Studies Department during the late 1960s and early 1970s. Angry about oppression, they rallied for changes. Kekoa wondered about incorporating activism into current university curricula but explained, "[T]hat challenges things…[because] the university is then supporting" it. He acknowledged that the university "can let us rally on campus. We can have our speech, but when they begin to support and create classes around it, that's a whole other thing." Instead of learning about direct action, he noted university courses took more of a "gentle approach," which emphasized policy writing. He reasoned:

> [T]he way we're educated teaches you not to rock the boat too much because then things get bad for you or you'll get discredited. You might lose your chances at school…I guess there's a lot of fear too….We're just not taught to be that radical anymore.

Kekoa expressed the (illusive) doublespeak that constitutes educating students to be active members of society. Educational institutions appear to increase inclusion into democracy as they prepare students to civically engage; however, there are strict boundaries around social behaviors that are considered legible (and legal) for democratic action within (and outside) university spaces. In short, emphasizing individual transformation, the kind encouraged by ideal citizenship, is much more palatable for

service learning than joining in solidarity with collective efforts that demand more just systems.

Ideal Citizens for Democracy and Domination

As I have tried to show, service learning has been constructed and used, in part, to support the project of creating ideal citizens who bolster the twin, national aims of democracy and domination. These mutual aims are not new, but rather a continuation of old ideas and practices. Historically, education, business, and political leaders (those with power in dominant society) have deemed specific characteristics as valuable, designed curriculum around these characteristics, and then taught these traits of "civilized" and respectable values, knowledge, and behaviors to the public (Watkins, 2001). Examples of these assimilation practices are plentiful: Indigenous children were placed in missionary or government-run boarding schools (Grande, 2004); during and post-Reconstruction black people were trained to be teachers via white-normed curriculum, with the purpose of socializing ("civilizing") other black people (Watkins, 2001); and more recently, "urban education" practices have focused on ensuring that black and brown youth are disciplined into socially accepted knowledge and behaviors (e.g., Tran & Birman, 2019). By and large, formal education has been formulated to benefit the elite's vision of U.S. democracy (Apple, 2004; Grande, 2004; Watkins, 2001).

While the mutually constitutive ideas of democracy and domination have existed throughout U.S. history to maintain social control, within neoliberalism, they have acquired particular contours of individual transformation. Specifically, ideal citizens are hailed into desirable characteristics of developing individual consciousness through

traits like cultural awareness, empathy, and civic responsibility. It makes sense that educators who help to foster individual consciousness hope to develop an ethic of care within students. Practitioners of critical service learning encourage students to examine the discourses and practices that have shaped the social conditions requiring such responsibility. That can be beneficial. Yet, we also must ask who these habits and skills of citizenship are for? And, what sorts of problems are meant to be addressed? These desired characteristics for addressing public problems do not seem to encompass houseless people who have worked together, despite their differences, to build a functioning tent city. Nor do they include Black Lives Matter activists who have practiced the art of public argument against police brutality. Attempts to dismantle continued capitalism, colonialism, and white supremacy do not coincide with the habits, identities, or knowledge that university, nonprofit, and private foundation leaders—all of whom have been involved in sustaining inequality—have claimed necessary for citizenship.

The caring traits ideal citizens are called into are predicated on a logic of superiority. In short, caring tends to uphold dominant forms of knowledge, values, and behaviors to maintain hegemonic control, particularly of bodies on the social margins. Further, universities carelessly acquiesce to increased mechanisms of surveillance as social behaviors are monitored and evaluated for who falls within the parameters of ideal citizenship. Data from electronic records are used to determine who is considered worthy of being labeled an ideal citizen within the constructed hierarchy. This tracking may impact just how political people, and the projects they pursue, are willing to be.

In the subjectification of ideal citizens through service learning, attention is focused on the gratifying stories of kindness and connection, leaving the oppressive *and* disruptive tones of these racial projects as a faint backdrop. The stories of positive individual transformation that occur through interaction with others (in the case of service learning, for both the service learner and those the service learner engages with) have become so commonplace and feel-good that educators and students alike are hesitant to critique these forms of helping and learning. When the performance of civic responsibility and democracy entice our sensibilities, it is difficult to point out the twisted ways that domination is being enacted. The rhetoric of kindness is powerfully seductive. The positive feelings that accompany representations of helping mask the interactions that reinforce white supremacy, capitalism, and colonialism—as well as the ways in which people attempt to disrupt these intertwined systems. More specifically, the value of individually taking civic responsibility obscures and shifts attention away from confronting many problematic power dynamics, including deficit-based discourses about low-income immigrant communities; U.S. military practices that continue to desecrate natural resources; systematic defunding of public education and social services; corporate deregulation, which spawns increased exploitation of labor; dispossession of land and water from Indigenous communities; among others. Rather than identifying and trying to change the ways that social structures stratify bodies, values, knowledge, and behavior, service learning has relied on these systems to encourage college students to examine their level of power and privilege—what many service learners refer to as being "fortunate" (e.g., Daniel's comment in chapter 4; Mitchell, Donahue, & Young-Law, 2012). Moreover, service learning has positioned

college students within these systems to extract knowledge from people on the social margins while gaining skills and credentials needed for future jobs (Raddon & Harrison, 2015; Santiago-Ortiz, 2019) as well as shape materially underresourced communities into forms of U.S., white, middle-class normed acceptability (Cann & McCloskey, 2015). Amidst these formations of class, race, and nation, the service learning field largely has enshrined the practice with the promise of educating young people for democratic participation.

Of course, calling for disruptions is unsettling to the state and to institutions of higher education, and thus are not easy to inspire nor to implement. These demands require changing how systems are structured, including reformulating how people from different groups experience life. For example, corporate and even university executives would not be making hundreds of times more than their average employees. Further, attention would be spent on efforts like divesting from private property and natural resource exploitation as well as thwarting competitive rewards and militarism.

By and large, service learning scholars and practitioners have hoped that exposing college students to extreme societal stratification would motivate them to be agents of social change, thereby transforming society individually and incrementally. I argue that wishing for social transformation through individual and incremental means will never be powerful enough to counter the entrenched systems of white supremacy, capitalism, and colonialism—all of which have the expansive capability to accommodate shifting and contradictory definitions and formations.

A helpful step in addressing the tensions within service learning is to name them and wrestle with them in theory and practice. All too often, service learning's successes

have been celebrated, in part to legitimize the practice. Stories of helping, showing kindness and empathy, and even understanding the root causes of injustice, might make us feel better about current affairs. However, we need to identify and contend with how unjust systems have been part and parcel to service learning as universities are situated to shape citizens for democracy and domination. We need to attend to the damage that service learning can reinforce through rhetoric and practice as well as find ways to engage in different and more just realities.

Different Possibilities

Despite service learning being a recent manifestation of formal education's effort to maintain the reiterative forces of democracy and domination by shaping ideal citizens, it is possible to envision and implement alternative systems that do not depend on hierarchies of worth for the mere process of living in the world. In order to inspire more just presents and futures, we can value, teach, and learn collective activism. While collective activism is not necessarily an antidote for social stratification, it could at least move attempts for social change away from individual transformation and toward joint action. Building coalitional efforts have the potential of aligning people against unjust systems by recognizing and utilizing the knowledge, values, and behaviors that people bring. The type of activist efforts I am thinking of are exemplified in contemporary social movements like Kū Kia'i Mauna (Guardians of the Mountain), Standing Rock, and Black Lives Matter but also in the actions of smaller groups like Whose Diversity? at the University of Minnesota and other such coalitions that have protested tuition hikes and treatment of students of color; organized for graduate student labor unions; and called for institutional divestment from Israel's oppression of Palestine. Rather than

focusing on self-development or disciplining the behavior of "other" individuals' lives, these efforts have aimed to disrupt systems that generate experiences of stratification.

Because how issues are framed matter for what knowledge, discourse, and practices are (re)produced, we need to be mindful of the partnerships created for experiential learning. Joining with more activist-based organizations that are explicitly anti-racist, anti-capitalist, and anti-colonialist can teach students the complexities and possibilities of activism in ways that most nonprofits do not. In the process of working with activist-based organizations, students can still experience individual transformation, but they do so in a way that dislodges the paternalistic power relations prominent in many service learning encounters—even the critical ones that analyze the root causes of injustice. I do not recommend institutionalizing activist-oriented learning as has been the case with service learning. Doing so could weaken activist groups and continue the problems of constructing ideal citizens for a new labor force (and thus, a rearticulated democracy and domination for increased national interests). Instead, let's imperfectly build from the bottom up and outside in, all along the way acknowledging and making space for conflict and resistance against the hierarchies that damage bodies, knowledges, and spirits.

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